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ANOTHER WORLD THAN THIS . . .



an anthology

How fair the flowers unaware,
That do not know what beauty is.
With poets and gazelles they share
Another world than this.

ANOTHER WORLD THAN THIS . . .

an anthology

compiled by

V. SACKVILLE-WEST
and
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FOREWORD

The compilers of this anthology have tried not to cheat. They have, on the whole, adhered honourably to the underlinings they found they had already made in their own books on the shelves of their separate rooms. They had both been in the habit for many years of marking passages which particularly pleased them, and of scribbling an index for reference at the end of each book—as every true reader of books should train himself to do. The residue, as embodied in the following pages, thus represents the lifetime literary taste of two persons with somewhat different occupations in life; a taste pursued in each case from adolescence to middle-age; yet so curiously homogeneous in its ultimate result, that in a sudden spirit of amused comparison they decided to pool their book-markings into one printed volume.

A great deal that was marked, or privately indexed, has been omitted. These omissions do not mean that the compilers have, at any time in their reading lives, failed to appreciate the recognized masterpieces of our own literature or such foreign literature as they were able to enjoy. These omissions mean only that they did not wish to insult the fastidious reader by the inclusion of passages he already knew by heart or could readily find elsewhere.

The subjects seemed to divide themselves into four categories: love, nature, philosophy, and, of course, some miscellaneous. It has therefore been the endeavour of the compilers to make a balanced mixture from each category for every month in the year. It did not prove possible to adhere quite strictly to this principle, but that at any rate was the guiding idea.

In the matter of translation, they have assumed in most cases that French would be familiar to the majority of readers, but have made two exceptions in favour of Mrs. Cornford's remarkable versions of poems on pp. 49 and 139 respectively. Then, in order not to burden the text, they have placed a literal translation of the longer Italian extracts for easy reference at the end of the book. Greek and Latin extracts, being so brief, have a literal translation appended in the text.

Spelling has in most cases been modernized, except where it was clearly necessary to retain the old spelling, either for the sake of the metre, or because it was felt to add a charm which would otherwise have been absent.

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JANUARY

It would content me, father, first to learn
How the Eternal fram'd the firmament;
Which bodies lend their influence by fire,
And which are fill'd with hoary winter's ice;
What sign is rainy, and what star is fair;
Why by the rules of true proportion
The year is still divided into months,
The months to days, the days to certain hours;
What fruitful race shall fill the future world;
Or for what time shall this round building stand;
What magistrates, what kings shall keep in awe
Men's minds with bridles of th'eternal law.

GEORGE PEELE [1558?-1597?]

The Love of King David and Queen Bethsabe

Three score and ten, the life and age of man,
In holy David's eyes seemed but a span;
And half the time is lost and spent in sleep,
So only thirty-five for use we keep.
Our days of youth must be abated all—
Childhood and youth wise Solomon doth call
But vanity: vanity, he says,
Is what befalls us in our childish days.
Our days of age we take no pleasure in;
Our days of grief we wish had never been:
So age deducted, sleep, and youth, and sorrow,
Only one space is all the life we borrow.

ANON [before 1640?]
Bodley M.S. Don, c. 57

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

MATTHEW ARNOLD [1828-1888]
from Dover Beach

The wings of man's life are plumed with the feathers of
death.

*From a petition addressed to Queen
Elizabeth by a seaman*

Hawthorn had lost his motley livery,
The naked twigs were shivering all for cold,
And dropping down the tears abundantly;
Each thing, methought, with weeping eye me told
The cruel season, bidding me withhold
Myself within; for I was gotten out
Into the fields, whereas I walk'd about.

* * * * *

And sorrowing I to see the summer flowers,
The lively green, the lusty leas forlorn,
The sturdy trees so shatter'd with the showers,
The fields so fade that flourish'd so beforne,
It taught me well, all earthly things be born
To die the death, for nought long time may last
The summer's beauty yields to winter's blast.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST
[1536-1608]
*From the Induction to the Mirror for
Magistrates* [1563]

Read lightly here, for here, 'tis said,
When piping winds are hushed around,
A small note wakes from underground,
Where now his tiny bones are laid.
No more in lone and leafless groves,
With ruffled wing and faded breast,
His friendless, homeless spirit roves;
—Gone to the world where birds are blest!
Where never cat glides o'er the green,
Or school-boy's giant form is seen;
But love, and joy, and smiling spring
Inspire their little souls to sing.

SAMUEL ROGERS [1763–1835]
“*An Epitaph on a Robin-Redbreast,*”
The Pleasures of Memory [1806]

Lined coat, warm cap and easy felt slippers,
In the little tower, at the low window, sitting over the sunken
brazier.
Body at rest, heart at peace; no need to rise early.
I wonder if the courtiers at the Western Capital know of these
things, or not?

PO CHU-I [A.D. 772-846]

Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

Salute, o genti umane affaticate!
Tutto trapassa e nulla può morir.
Noi troppo odiammo e sofferimmo. Amate.
Il mondo è bello e santo è l'avvenir.

GIOSUE CARDUCCI [1836-1907]

Giambi ed Epodi

Translation:

Hail to you, you tired races of mankind! All things pass, but
nothing can die. We hated too much, we suffered too much;
let us love! The world is lovely and the future sacred.

The neediest are our neighbours if we give heed to them,
Prisoners in the dungeon, the poor in the cottage,
Charged with a crew of children and with a landlord's rent.
What they win by their spinning, to make their porridge with,
Milk and meal, to satisfy the babes,—
This they must spend on the rent of their houses,
Ay, and themselves suffer with hunger,
With woe in winter rising a-nights,
In the narrow room to rock the cradle,
Carding, combing, clouting, washing, rubbing, winding,
peeling rushes.
Pitiful is it to read the cottage-woman's woe,
Ay, and many another that puts a good face on it,
Ashamed to beg, ashamed to let neighbours know
All that they need, noontide and evening.
Many the children, and nought but a man's hands
To clothe and feed them; and few pennies come in,
And many mouths to eat the pennies up.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)—1400(?)]

PIERS PLOWMAN

The Vision of God's Bull of Pardon

It is not enough for a man to do the things that be good; but he must also have a care, he do them with a good grace. And a good grace is nothing else but such a manner of light as shineth in the aptness of things set in good order and well disposed one with another and perfectly knit and united together. Without which proportion and measure, even that which is good is not fair; and the fairness itself is not pleasant. And as meats though they be good and savoury will give men no mind to eat them, if they have no pleasant relish and taste, so fares it with the manners of men . . . if a man does not season them with a certain sweetness, which you call (as I take it) Grace and Comeliness.

*From the Galateo of GIOVANNI DELLA CASA,
Archbishop of Benevento [1503-1556]
Translated by ROBERT PETERSON [1576]*

By Loving a Soul does propagate and beget itself. By Loving it does dilate and magnify itself. By Loving it does enlarge and delight itself. By Loving also it delighteth others, as by Loving it doth honour and enrich itself. But above all by Loving it does attain itself. Love also being the end of Souls, which are never perfect till they are in act what they are in power. They were made to love, and are dark and vain and comfortless till they do it. Till they love they are idle, or mis-employed. Till they love they are desolate; without their objects, and narrow and little, and dishonourable: but when they shine by Love upon all objects, they are accompanied with them and enlightened by them.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]
Centuries of Meditations

Love is like a lamb, and love is like a lion;
Fly from love, he fights; fight, then does he fly on;
Love is all in fire, and yet is ever freezing;
Love is much in winning, yet is more in leezing;*
Love is ever sick, and yet is never dying;
Love is ever true, and yet is ever lying;
Love does dote in liking, and is mad in loathing;
Love indeed is anything, yet indeed is nothing.

THOMAS MIDDLETON [1570(?)–1627]

* Leezing = losing.

To have known him, to have loved him
After lonesness long;
And then to be estranged in life,
And neither in the wrong;
And now for death to set his seal—
Ease me, a little ease, my song!

By wintry hills his hermit-mound
The sheeted snow-drifts drape,
And houseless there the snow-bird flits
Beneath the fir-trees' crape:
Glazed now with ice the cloistral vine
That hid the shyest grape.

HERMAN MELVILLE [1819–1891]

From a Dirge for one who fell in battle

Room for a Soldier! lay him in the clover;
He loved the fields, and they shall be his cover;
Make his mound with hers who called him once her lover:
 Where the rain may rain upon it,
 Where the sun may shine upon it,
 Where the lamb hath lain upon it,
 And the bee will dine upon it.

Bear him to no dismal tomb under city churches;
Take him to the fragrant fields, by the silver birches,
Where the whippoorwill shall mourn, where the oriole perches:
 Make his mound with sunshine on it.

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS
The Magnolia, 1866

Man's life is well comparèd to a feast,
Furnished with choice of all variety:
To it comes Time; and as a bidden guest
He sets him down, in pomp and majesty;
The three-fold age of man, the waiters be;
 Then with an earthen voider (made of clay),
 Comes Death, and takes the table clean away.

RICHARD BARNFIELD [1574-1627]
Poems [1598]

In darkness let me dwell, the ground shall sorrow be,
The roof despair to bar all cheerful light from me,
The walls of marble black that moistened still shall weep,
My music hellish jarring sounds to banish friendly sleep,
Thus wedded to my woes, and bedded in my tomb
O let me dying live till death doth come.

My dainties grief shall be, and tears my poisoned wine,
My sighs the air through which my panting heart shall pine,
My robes my mind shall suit exceeding blackest night,
My study shall be tragic thoughts and fancy to delight,
Pale ghosts and frightful shades shall my acquaintance be:
O thus, my hapless joy, I haste to thee.

ANON.

From JOHN COPRARIO's Funeral Tears, etc. [1608]

Also in ROBERT DOWLAND's Musical Banquet [1610]

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills:
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
Resolution and Independence

Flee fro the press, and dwelle with sothfastnesse. . . .
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste out of thy stal!
Know they contree, look up, thank God of al!
Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede;
And trothe shal deliver, hit is no drede.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340?-1400]
Balade de bon conseil

Were I a king, I might command content;
Were I obscure, unknown should be my cares;
And were I dead, no thoughts should me torment,
Nor words, nor wrongs, nor loves, nor hopes, nor fears.
A doubtful choice, of three things one to crave:
A kingdom, or a cottage, or a grave.

EDWARD DE VERE, EARL OF OXFORD [1550-1604]
From JOHN MUNDY'S Songs and Psalms [1594]

It is storied of that prince,* that having conceived a purpose to invade Italy, he sent for Cineas, a philosopher and the King's friend: to whom he communicated his design, and desired his counsel. Cineas asked him to what purpose he invaded Italy? He said, to conquer it. And what will you do when you have conquered it? Go into France, said the King, and conquer that. And what will you do when you have conquered France? Conquer Germany. And what then? said the philosopher. Conquer Spain. I perceive, said Cineas, you mean to conquer all the World. What will you do when you have conquered all? Why then, said the King, we will return, and enjoy ourselves at quiet in our own land. So you may now, said the philosopher, without all this ado.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]
Centuries of Meditations

* Pyrrhus, King of Epirus.

My son! and what's a son? A thing begot
Within a pair of minutes—thereabout;
A lump bred up in darkness, and doth serve
To ballast these light creatures we call women;
And, at nine months' end, creeps forth to light.
What is there yet in a son,
To make a father dote, rave, or run mad?
Being born, it pouts, cries, and breeds teeth.
What is there yet in a son? He must be fed,
Be taught to go, and speak. Ay, or yet
Why might not a man love a calf as well?
Or melt in passion o'er a frisking kid,
As for a son? Methinks, a young bacon,
Or a fine little smooth horse colt,
Should move a man as much as doth a son;
For one of these, in very little time,
Will grow to some good use; whereas a son,
The more he grows in stature, and in years,
The more unsquar'd, unbevell'd, he appears,
Reckons his parents among the rank of fools,
Strikes care upon their heads with his mad riots;
Makes them look old, before they meet with age.
This is a son!—And what a loss were this,
Consider'd truly?—O, but my Horatio
Grew out of reach of these insatiate humours:
He lov'd his loving parents;
He was my comfort, and his mother's joy,
The very arm that did hold up our house;
Our hopes were stor'd up in him,
None but a damn'd murderer could hate him. . . .
Well, heaven is heaven still!
And there is Nemesis, and Furies,
And things call'd whips,
And they sometimes do meet with murderers:

They do not always 'scape, that is some comfort.
Ay, ay, ay; and then time steals on,
And steals, and steals, till violence leaps forth
Like thunder wrapp'd in a ball of fire,
And so doth bring confusion to them all.

THOMAS KYD [1557(?)–1595(?)]
The Spanish Tragedy [1594]

Aujourd'hui, 23 janvier, 1862, j'ai subi un singulier avertissement: j'ai senti passer sur moi le vent de l'aile de l'imbécillité.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE [1821–1867]
Mon cœur mis à nu

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon. . . .

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE [1772–1834]

FEBRUARY

Dark, dusky Man he needs would single forth
To make the partner of his own pure ray:
And should we powers of Heaven, spirits of worth,
Bow our bright heads before a King of clay?
It shall not be, said I, and clomb the North,
Where never wing of angel yet made way.
What though I missed my blow? yet I struck high,
And to dare something is some victory.

RICHARD CRASHAW [1613(?)–1649]
Sospetto d'Herode

Then did I dwell within a world of light
Distinct and separate from all men's sight,
Where I did feel strange thoughts, and such things see
That were, or seemed, only revealed to me;
There I saw all the world enjoyed by one;
There I was in the world my self alone;
No business serious seemed but one; no work
But one was found, and that in me did lurk.
D'you ask me what? It was with clearer eyes
To see all creatures full of deities.

No ear,
But eyes themselves were all the hearers there,
And every stone and every star a tongue.
And every gale of wind a curious song.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]

When my bier moveth on the day of death,
Think not my heart is in this world.
Do not weep for me and cry 'Woe, woe!'
Thou wilt fall in the devil's snare: that is woe.
When thou seest my hearse, cry not 'Parted, parted!'
Union and meeting are mine in that hour.
If thou commit me to the grave, say not 'Farewell, farewell!'
For the grave is a curtain hiding the communion of Paradise.
After beholding descent, consider resurrection;
Why should setting be injurious to the sun and moon?
To thee it seems a setting, but 'tis a rising;
Tho' the vault seems a prison, 'tis the release of the soul.

JALĀLU 'DDIN RUMĪ [1207-1273]
Translated by REYNOLD NICHOLSON
The Divani Shamsi Tabriz

I have been priest and parson for thirty winters past,
But I cannot solfa or sing, or read a Latin life of saints;
But I can find a hare, in a field or in a furrow,
Better than construe the first Psalm or explain it to the parish.
I can hold a friendly meeting, I can cast a shire's accounts,
But in mass book or Pope's edict I cannot read a line.

If a man do me service, or help me in my need,
I am unkind when he is courteous, I cannot understand him.
I have and always had the manners of a hawk,
I am not lured with love; there must be meat under the thumb.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]
PIERS PLOWMAN
The Vision of the Seven Sins

By myself walking,
To myself talking,
When as I ruminate
On my untoward fate,
Scarcely seem I
Alone sufficiently,
Black thoughts continually
Crowding my privacy;
They come unbidden,
Like foes at a wedding,
Thrusting their faces
In better guests' places,
Peevish and malcontent,
Clownish, impertinent,
Dashing the merriment:
So in like fashions
Dim cogitations
Follow and haunt me,
In my heart festering,
In my ears whispering,
'Thy friends are treacherous,
Thy foes are dangerous,
Thy dreams ominous.'
Fierce Anthropophagi,
Spectra, Diaboli,
What scared St. Anthony,
Hobgoblins, Lemures,
Dreams of Antipodes,
Night-riding Incubi
Troubling the fantasy,
All dire illusions
Causing confusions;
Figments heretical,
Scruples fantastical,

Doubts diabolical,
Abaddon vexeth me,
Mahu perplexeth me,
Lucifer teareth me—
Jesu! Maria! liberate nos ab his diris tentationibus
Inimici.

CHARLES LAMB [1775–1834]
Hypochondriacus

The Life of this Clerk was just threescore and ten
Nearly half of which time he had sung out Amen
In his youth he was married like other young men
But his Wife died one day so he chaunted Amen:
A second he took she departed what then?
He married and buried a third with Amen.
Thus his joys and his sorrows were Treble but then
His Voice was deep Bass as he sung out Amen.
On the Horn he could blow as well as most men
So his Horn was exalted in blowing Amen.
But he lost all his Wind after threescore and ten
And here with three Wives he waits till again
The Trumpet shall rouse him to sing out Amen.

*Epitaph in the churchyard of Crayford, Kent, to
Peter Isnell, Clerk of the Parish [1811]*

*Of the great and famous ever to be honoured Knight,
Sir Francis Drake, and of my little little self*

The dragon that our seas did raise his crest
And brought back heaps of gold unto his nest,
Unto his foes more terrible than thunder,
Glory of his age, after-ages wonder,
Excelling all those that excelled before;
It's feared we shall have none such any more,
Effecting all he sole did undertake,
Valiant, just, wise, mild, honest, godly Drake.

This man when I was little I did meet
As he was walking up Totnes long street.
He asked me whose I was? I answered him.
He asked me if his good friend were within?
A fair red orange in his hand he had,
He gave it me whereof I was right glad,
Takes and kissed me, and prays "God bless my boy"
Which I record with comfort to this day.

Could he on me have breathèd with his breath,
His gifts, Elias-like, after his death,
Then had I been enabled for to do
Many brave things I have a heart unto.
I have as great desire as e'er had he
To joy, annoy, friends, foes; but t'will not be.

ROBERT HAYMAN [1575-1632]

Sir Drake, whom well the worlds end knew,
Which thou didst compass round,
And whom both Poles of Heaven once saw,
Which North and South do bound,
The Stars above would make thee known,
If men here silent were;
The Sun himself cannot forget
His fellow Traveller.

Epigram: on Sir Francis Drake
Wits Recreations [1640]

Shy in their herding dwell the fallow deer,
They are spirits of wild sense. Nobody near
Comes upon their pastures. There a life they live,
Of sufficient beauty, phantom, fugitive,
Treading as in jungles free leopards do,
Printless as evelight, instant as dew.
The great kine are patient, and home-coming sheep
Know our bidding. The fallow deer keep
Delicate and far their counsels wild,
Never to be folded reconciled
To the spoiling hand as the poor flocks are;
Lightfoot, and swift, and unfamiliar,
Thesē you may not hinder, unconfined
Beattiful flocks of the mind.

JOHN DRINKWATER [1882-1937]
Deer

The mouse paused in his walk
And dropped his wheaten stalk;
Grave cattle wagged their heads
In rumination;
The eagle gave a cry
From his cloud station:
Larks on thyme beds
Forbore to mount or sing;
Bees drooped upon the wing;
The raven perched on high
Forgot his ration;
The conies in their rock,
A feeble nation,
Quaked sympathetic;
The mocking-bird left off to mock;
Huge camels knelt as if
In deprecation;
The kind hart's tears were falling;
Chattered the wistful stork;
Dove-voices with a dying fall
Cooed desolation
Answering grief by grief.
Only the serpent in the dust,
Wriggling and crawling,
Grinned an evil grin and thrust
His tongue out with its fork.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI [1830-1894]
Eve

Come, be my valentine!
I'll gather eglantine,
Cowslips and sops-in-wine,
 With fragrant roses;
Down by thy Phillis sit,
She will white lilies get
And daffodillies fit
 To make thee posies.

I bear in sign of love
A sparrow in my glove,
And in my breast a dove—
 This shall be all thine.
Besides of sheep a flock,
Which yieldeth many a lock,
And this shall be thy stock,—
 Come be my valentine.

DR. LANCELOT ANDREWES [1555-1626]

If there be any spark of Adam's Paradized perfection yet embered up in the breasts of mortal men, certainly God hath bestowed that, his perfectest image, on Poets. None come so near to God in wit. As they condemn the world, so contrarily of the mechanical world are none more condemned.

Despised they are of the world, their thoughts are exalted above the world of ignorance and all earthly conceits.

As sweet Angelical choristers they are continually conversant in the heaven of arts.

Happy, thrice happy are they, whom God hath doubled his spirit upon, and given a double soul unto to be Poets.

THOMAS NASHE [1567-1601]
from The Unfortunate Traveller
Description of the Earl of Surrey

For this is my mynde, this one pleasoure have I
Of bokes to have grete plenty and aparayle. . . .

Still am I besy bokes assemblynge
For to have plenty it is a pleasaunt thyng
In my conceyt and to have them ay in honde
But what they mene do I not understonde.

And yet I have them in great reverence
And honoure savyng them from fylth and ordure
By often brusschyng and moche dilygence,
Full goodly bounde in pleasaunt coverture
Of damas satyn or else of velvet pure.
I kepe them sure feryng lyst they sholde be lost
For in them is the connyng wherein I me bost.

ALEXANDER BARCLAY [1475(?)–1552]
The Shyp of Folyes [1509]
Translated from Brandt

In ogni cerchio genera la Vita
novelle forme, e chiude ogni conchiglia
perle che il sol non mai vide, o Poeti.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO [1863-1938]
Ai Poeti

Translation:

In every cycle, life creates new forms; and every shell,
Oh Poets! hides pearls on which the sun never looked.

I sleep never on the mount Pernaso
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cithero.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?) - 1400]
The Franklin's Prologue

Ἐκ γάρ τοι Μουσέων καὶ ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος
 ἄνδρες ἄοιδοι ἔασιν ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ κιθαρισταί,
 ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες· ὃ δ' ὄλβιος, ὃν τινα Μοῦσαι
 φίλωνται· γλυκερὴ οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥέει αὐδή.
 Εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδεῖ Θυμῷ
 ἄζηται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ ἄοιδος
 Μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
 ὑμνήσῃ μάκαράς τε Θεούς, οἳ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν
 αἴψ' ὃ γε δυσφροσυνέων ἐπιλήθεται οὐδέ τι κηδέων
 μέμνηται· ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεάων.

HESIOD · [750 B.C.(?)]

Theogony 94-103

Translation:

Since it is because of the Muses and far darting Apollo that there should be poets and harp players upon this earth. Kings are made by Zeus, but happy is the man whom the Muses love. Sweet are the words that flow from his mouth. For although a man, in his newly distressed soul, may suffer sorrow and have fear because his heart is troubled, yet when a poet, the servant of the Muses, hymns the famous deeds of men of old or the blessed gods who live in Olympus, then suddenly he forgets his heavy-heartedness and remembers no more the worries that oppressed him. Yet the gifts of the Muses pass all too rapidly away.

Ahi, fu una nota del poema eterno
Quel ch'io sentiva e picciol verso or è.

GIOSUE CARDUCCI [1836-1907]
Giambi e Epodi

Translation:

Ah me! What I felt was a note of the eternal poem; and now
it's no more than a tiny little verse.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,
Philosopher!—a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave! . . .
Shut close the door; press down the latch;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
A Poet's Epitaph

O Petrarch, head and prince of poets all,
Whose lively gift of flowing eloquence
Well may we seek, but find not how or whence
So rare a gift with thee did rise and fall,
Peace to thy bones, and glory immortal
Be to thy name and to her excellence
Whose beauty lighted in thy time and since
So to be set forth as none other shall.

Why hath not our pens rhymes so perfect wrought
Ne why our time forth bringeth beauty such
To try our wits as gold is by the touch,
If to the style the matter aided aught?

But there was never Laura more than one
And her had Petrarch for his paragon.

ANON.

*Published in Tottel's Miscellany of Songs
and Sonnets [1557]*

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturb'd as death, the night.

My house a cottage more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.

My garden painted o're
With nature's hand, not art's, and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, and happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish my fate,

But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my Sun his beams display,
Or in Clouds hide them; I have liv'd to day.

ABRAHAM COWLEY [1618-1667]

A Vote

And eek to me hit is a great penaunce
Sith rym in English hath swich scarsitee
To folowe word by word the curiositee
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in France.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?) - 1400]

The Complaynt of Venus

Who-so wol here it in a lenger wyse,
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille,
That hightë Dant, for he can al devyse
Fro point to point, nat o word wol he faille.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
The Monkes Tale

Tu se' lo mio maestro, e il mio autore;
tu se' solo colui, da cui io tolsi
lo bello stile, che m'ha fatto onore.

DANTE [1265–1321]
Inferno, I, 85–88

Translation:

Thou (Virgil) are my master and my author: thou alone art
he from whom I drew that lovely style which has done me
honour.

Adeste, hendecasyllabi, quot estis
Omnes undique, quotquot estis omnes.

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]
XLII

· *Translation:*

Come here, hendecasyllables, all of you, from everywhere,
as many as there are of you, all of you, as many as there are.

O you chorus of indolent reviewers,
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
All composed in the metre of Catullus . . .
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tumble,
So fantastical is the dainty metre.

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON [1809-1892]
Experiments in Quantity

En art il s'agit d'être intéressant.

JULES LAFORGUE [1860-1887]
Mélanges posthumes

MARCH

Tom O' Bedlam

The moon's my constant mistress,
And the lovely owl my marrow;
The flaming drake,
And the night-crow, make
Me music to my sorrow.

I know more than Apollo;
For oft, when he lies sleeping,
I behold the stars
At mortal wars,
And the rounded welkin weeping.

The moon embraces her shepherd,
And the Queen of Love her warrior;
While the first does horn
The stars of the morn,
And the next the heavenly farrier.

With a heart of furious fancies,
Whereof I am commander:
With a burning spear,
And a horse of air,
To the wilderness I wander;

With a Knight of ghosts and shadows,
I summoned am to Tourney:
Ten leagues beyond
The wide world's end;
Methinks it is no journey.

ANON.

British Museum MS.
No. 24665 [1615]

To see a strange outlandish fowl
A quaint baboon, an ape, an owl,
A dancing bear, a giant's bone,
A foolish engine move alone,
A morris-dance, a puppet play,
Mad Tom to sing a roundelay,
A woman dancing on a rope,
Bull-baiting also at the "Hope,"
A rhymers' jests, a juggler's cheats,
A tumbler showing cunning feats,
Or players acting on a stage,—
There goes the bounty of our age!
But unto any pious motion
There's little corn and less devotion.

HENRY FARLEY

*From St. Paul's Church, her bill for
the partiments*

There were three Ravens sat on a tree,—
They were as black as they might be:
One of them said to his make—*
Where shall we our breakfast take?

Down in yonder greenë field
There lies a knight slain under his shield.

His hounds they lie down at his feet;
So well they their master keep.

His hawks they fly so eagerly,
There's no fowl dare him come nigh.

Down there comes a fallow doe,
Great with young as she might do.

She lift up his bloody head,
And kist his wounds that were so red.

She gat him upon her back
And carried him to earthen lake.

She buried him before the prime;
She was dead ere even-time.

God send every gentleman
Such hounds, such hawks, and such a leman!

From Melismata [1611]

* Old edition. "Make," which is required for the rhyme, was a recognized form of "mate."

Le Silence vêtu de noir,
Retournant faire son devoir
Vole sur la mer et la terre,
Et l'Océan joyeux de sa tranquillité
Est un liquide verre
Où la face du Ciel imprime sa beauté.

Le visage du Firmament
Descendu dans cet élément
Y fait voir sa figure peinte,
Les feux du Ciel sans peur nagent dedans la mer
Et les poissons sans crainte
Glissent parmi ces feux qui semblent les aimer.

Dans le fond de ce grand miroir
La Nature se plaît à voir
L'onde et la flamme si voisines
Et les Astres tombés en ces pays nouveaux,
Salamandres marines,
Se baignent à plaisir dans le giron des eaux.

L'illustre Déesse des mois
Quittant son arc et son carquois
Descend avec eux dedans l'onde.
Son Croissant est sa Barque, où l'hameçon en main,
Fait de sa tresse blonde,
Elle pêche à loisir les perles du Jourdain.

DU BOIS HUS [1642 or 43]
Translation on p. 240—I

I have known cities with the strong-armed Rhine
Clasping their mouldered quays in lordly sweep;
And lingered where the Maine's low waters shine
Through Tyrian Frankfort; and been fain to weep
'Mid the green cliffs where pale Mosella laves
That Roman sepulchre, imperial Treves.
Ghent boasts her street, and Bruges her moonlight square;
And holy Mechlin, Rome of Flanders, stands,
Like a queen-mother, on her spacious lands;
And Antwerp shoots her glowing spire in air.
Yet have I seen no place, by inland brook,
Hill-top, or plain, or trim arcaded bowers,
That carries age so nobly in its look
As Oxford with the sun upon her towers.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER [1814-1863]

A beautiful place is the town of Lo-yang:
The big streets are full of spring light.
The lads go driving out with harps in their hands:
The mulberry girls go out to the fields with their baskets.
Golden whips glint at the horses' flanks,
Gauze sleeves brush the green boughs,
Racing dawn, the carriages come home—,
And the girls with their high baskets full of fruit.

By the EMPEROR CH' IEN WĒN-TI [6th Century]
Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

λέγω γὰρ τἀγαθὸν καλὸν εἶναι· σὺ δ' οὐκ οἶει; Ἐγώ γε.

PLATO [429–347 B.C.]
Lysis, 216

Translation:

For I assert that the good is beautiful, don't you agree? Of course I do.

Take any bird, and put it in a cage,
And do all thine intent and thy courage
To foster it tenderly with meat and drink,
Of all dainties that thou canst bethink,
And keep it also cleanly as thou may;
Although his cage of gold be never so gay,
Yet hath this bird, by twenty thousand-fold,
Leifer in a forest, that is rude and cold,
Go eatë worms and suchë wretchedness.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]

nec tibi cuius
turbavit nitidos extinctus passer ocellos.

JUVENAL [60–140 A.D.]
Satire VI

Translation:

nor to you, Lesbia, whose lovely eyes were clouded by a
sparrow's death.

Give me the merchants of the Indian mines,
 That trade in metal of the purest mould;
 The wealthy Moor, that in the eastern rocks
 Without control can pick his riches up,
 And in his house heap pearl like pebble stones,
 Receive them free, and sell them by the weight!
 Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
 Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,
 Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,
 And seld-seen costly stones of so great price,
 As one of them, indifferently rated,
 And of a carat of this quantity,
 May serve, in peril of calamity,
 To ransom great kings from captivity,
 This is the ware wherein consists my wealth;
 And thus methinks should men of judgment frame
 Their means of traffic from the vulgar trade;
 And, as their wealth increaseth, so inclose
 Infinite riches in a little room.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE [1564-1593]
The Jew of Malta

Cesare armato con gli occhi grifagni

DANTE [1265-1321]
Inferno, IV, 121-123

Translation:
 Cæsar armed, with the eyes of a falcon.

Thule, the period of cosmography,
Doth vaunt of Hecla, whose sulphureous fire
Both melt the frozen clime and thaw the sky,
Trinacrian Etna's flames ascend not higher:
These things seem wondrous, yet more wondrous I,
Whose heart with fear doth freeze, with love doth fry.

The Andalusian merchant, that returns
Laden with cochineal and china dishes,
Reports in Spain how strangely Fogo burns
Amidst an ocean full of flying fishes:
These things seems wondrous, yet more wondrous I,
Whose heart with fear doth freeze, with love doth fry.

From THOMAS WHEELKES'
Madrigals of Six Parts [1600]

What needeth all this travail and turmoiling,
Short'ning the life's sweet pleasure
To seek this far-fetched treasure
In those hot climates under Phoebus broiling?

O fools, can you not see a traffic nearer
In my sweet lady's face, where Nature showeth
Whatever treasure eye sees or heart knoweth?
Rubies and diamonds dainty
And orient pearls such plenty,
Coral and ambergreece sweeter and dearer
Than which the South Seas or Moluccas lend us,
Or either Indies, East or West, do send us!

*From JOHN WILBYE'S
Madrigals [1598]*

The Happy Countryman

Who can live in heart so glad
As the merry country lad?
Who upon a fair green balk *
May at pleasure sit and walk,
And amid the azure skies
See the morning sun arise,—
While he hears in every spring
How the birds do chirp and sing:
Or before the hounds in cry
See the hare go stealing by:
Or along the shallow brook,
Angling with a baited hook,
See the fishes leap and play
In a blessèd sunny day:
Or to hear the partridge call,
Till she have her covey all:
Or to see the subtle fox,
How the villain plies the box:
After feeding on his prey,
How he closely sneaks away,
Through the hedge and down the furrow
Till he gets into his burrow:
Then the bee to gather honey,
And the little black-haired coney,
On a bank for sunny place,
With her forefeet wash her face:
Are not these, with thousand moe
Than the courts of kings do know,
The true pleasing spirit's sights
That may breed true love's delights? . . .

NICHOLAS BRETON [1545(?)-1626(?)]

* A bank between ploughlands.

† More.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but forward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away, as these awake;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear
Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to inflict or bear?

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Classed among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LORD BYRON [1788–1824]
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage
Canto III LXXI–LXXII

The lowest trees have tops, the ant her gall,
The fly her spleen, the little spark his heat;
And slender hairs cast shadows, though but small,
And bees have stings, although they be not great;
Seas have their source, and so have shallow springs;
And love is love, in beggars and in kings.

Where waters smoothest run, deep are the fords;
The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move;
The firmest faith is in the fewest words;
The turtles cannot sing, and yet they love;
True hearts have eyes and ears, no tongues to speak;
They hear, and see, and sigh, and then they break.

(?)SIR EDWARD DYER [c. 1540-1607]
A Poetical Rhapsody [1602]

Epitaph

His being was in her alone:
And he not being, she was none.

They joyed one joy, one grief they grieved;
One love they loved, one life they lived.
The hand was one, one was the sword,
That did his death, her death afford.

As all the rest, so now the stone
That tombs the two is justly one.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY [1554-1586]
Arcadia [1593]

His thunder is entangled in my hair
And with my beauty is his lightning quenched.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?)–1597(?)]
The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe

I looked on my left hand, as the Lady told me,
And was ware of a woman, wonderly clad,
Her robe fur-edged, the finest on earth,
Crowned with a crown, the king hath no better,
Fairly her fingers were fretted with rings,
And in the rings red rubies, as red as a furnace,
And diamonds of dearest price, and double sapphires,
Sapphires and beryls poison to destroy.

Her rich robe of scarlet dye,
Her ribbons set with gold, red gold, rare stones;
Her array ravished me; such riches saw I never;
I wondered who she was, and whose wife she were.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]

PIERS PLOWMAN

The Vision of Lady Meed

Vidi jam juvenem premeret cum senior aetas
maerentem stultos praeteriisse dies.

Tibullus [54–19 B.C.]

I, IV

Translation:

Yes, I have seen young men, when sober age
comes upon them, cursing their stupid wasted days.

Kind are her answers,
But her performance keeps no day;
Breaks time, as dancers
From their own music when they stray.
All her free favours and smooth words
Wing my hopes in vain.
Oh did ever voice so sweet but only feign?
Can true love yield such delay
Converting joy to pain?

Lost is our freedom
When we submit to women so.
Why do we need them
When in their best they work our woe?
There is no wisdom
Can alter ends, by Fate prefixed.
Oh why is the good of man with evil mixed?
Never were days yet callèd two
But one night went betwixt.

THOMAS CAMPION [d. 1620]

Farewell, false Love, the oracle of lies,
A mortal foe and enemy to rest,
An envious boy from whom all cares arise,
A bastard vile, a beast with rage possess;
A way of error, a temple full of treason,
In all effects contrary unto reason.

A poison'd serpent cover'd all with flowers,
Mother of sighs and murderer of repose;
A sea of sorrows from whence are drawn such showers
As moisture lend to every grief that grows;
A school of guile, a net of deep deceit,
A gilded hook that holds a poison'd bait.

A fortress foiled which Reason did defend,
A Siren song, a fever of the mind,
A maze wherein affection finds no end,
A raging cloud that runs before the wind;
A substance like the shadow of the sun,
A goal of grief for which the wisest run.

A quenchless fire, a nurse of trembling fear,
A path that leads to peril and mishap,
A true retreat of sorrow and despair,
An idle boy that sleeps in Pleasure's lap;
A deep distrust of that which certain seems,
A hope of that which Reason doubtful deems.

*From WILLIAM BYRD'S
Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs [1588]*

APRIL

Geoffrey Chaucer

His stature was not very tall;
Lean he was, his legs were small,
Hosed within a stock of red,
A buttoned bonnet on his head,
From under which did hang, I ween,
Silver hairs both bright and sheen.
His beard was white, trimmèd round,
His count'nance blithe and merry found.
A sleeveless jacket large and wide
With many pleats and skirts side
Of water-chamlet * did he wear,
His shoes were cornèd-broad before,
A whittell † at his side he wore
And in his hand he bore a book.
Thus did this ancient poet look.

ROBERT GREENE [1560(?)–1592]

* Rich-coloured plush.

† A knife.

Nature, the vicaire of th'almyghty lorde.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
The Parlement of Foules

Nature, that fram'd us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds:
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wandering planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE [1564-1593]
Tamburlaine the Great

No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semēd bisier than he was.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
Canterbury Tales (Prologue)

Realms of this globe, that ever-circling run,
And rise alternate to embrace the sun;
Shall I with envy at my lot repine,
Because I boast so small a portion mine?
If e'er in thought of Andalusia's vines,
Golconda's jewels, or Potosi's mines;
In these, or those, if vanity forgot
The humbler blessings of my little lot;
Then may the stream that murmurs near my door,
The waving grove that loves its mazy shore,
Withhold each soothing pleasure that they gave,
No longer murmur, and no longer wave!

JOHN LANGHORNE [1735-1779]
Written in a collection of maps
The Poetical Works [1766]

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pierced—fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS [1844-1899]
Pied Beauty

Give me no high-flown fangled things,
No haughty pomp in marching chime,
Where muses play on golden strings
And splendour passes for sublime,
Where cities stretch as far as fame
And fancy's straining eye can go,
And piled until the sky for shame
Is stooping far away below.

I love the verse that mild and bland
Breathes of green fields and open sky,
I love the muse that in her hand
Bears flowers of native poesy;
Who walks nor skips the pasture brook
In scorn, but by the drinking horse
Leans oer its little brig to look
How far the sallows lean across,

And feels a rapture in her breast
Upon their root-fringed grains to mark
A hermit morehen's sedgy nest
Just like a naiad's summer bark.
She counts the eggs she cannot reach,
Admires the spot and loves it well,
And yearns, so nature's lessons teach,
Amid such neighbourhoods to dwell.

JOHN CLARE [1793-1864]
From The Flitting

Thus I went wide-where, walking alone,
In a wide wilderness, by a wood side.
Bliss of the birds song made me abide there,
And on a lawn under a linden I leaned awhile
To listen to their lays, their lovely notes;
The mirth of their mouths made me to sleep,
And mid that bliss I dreamed—marvellously.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]

PIERS PLOWMAN

The Vision of Do-Well

Salve, o venusta Sirmio, atque ero gaude:
gaudete vosque, o Lydiae lacus undae:
ridete, quicquid est domi cachinnorum.

Catullus [84–54 B.C.]

XXXI

Translation:

Hail lovely Sirmio! Rejoice with your master! And you
waves of the Lydian lake laugh with the laughter of every
ripple that you have!

Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below
Sweet Catullus' all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio!

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON [1809–1892]

April]

[69

Quali i fioretti dal notturno gelo
chinati e chiusi, poi che il sol gl'imbianca
si drizzan tutti aperti in loro stelo:

DANTE [1265-1321]
Inferno, II, 127-130

Translation:

As the little flowers which the night frost has bent and closed
become erect upon their stalks when the sun whitens them.

Tum liquidas corvi presso ter gutture voces
aut quater ingeminant, et saepe cubilibus altis
nescio qua praeter solitum dulcedine laeti
inter se in foliis strepitant; iuvat imbribus actis
progeniem parvam dulcisque revisere nidos.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Georgics I, 410

Translation:

And then the rooks, tightening their throats three times, or
it may be four times, will utter their liquid cries; and often in
their high dormitories they will chatter among the leaves
together happy with some unwonted pleasure that I know not
of. Glad they are, when the rain has ceased, to revisit their
small progeny and their sweet nests.

hortulus hic puteusque brevis nec reste movendus
in tenuis plantas facili diffunditur haustu.
vive bidentis amans et culti vilicus horti,
unde epulum possis centum dare Pythagoreis.
est aliquid, quocumque loco, quocumque recessu,
unius sese dominum fecisse lacertae.

JUVENAL [60-140 A.D.]
Satire III

Translation:

And there will you have a little garden and a well which will be so easy to get at that you can water your seedlings without having to use bucket and rope. There you will live, becoming fond of the hoe, tending your tidy garden which will produce enough for you to give a banquet to a hundred vegetarians. It is something, in whatever place, in whatever corner, to have become the lord and master even of one single lizard.

Suddenly afraid, half waking, half sleeping,
And greatly dismayed, a woman sat weeping,
With favour in her face far passing my reason;
And of her sore weeping this was the encheson.*
Her son in her lap laid, she said, slain by treason:
If weeping might ripe be, it seemed then in season.

Jesus, so she sobbed
So her son was bobbed †
And of his life robbed;
Saying these words as I say to thee:
“Who cannot weep, come learn of me.”

I said I could not weep, I was so hard hearted.
She answered me shortly, with words that smarted,
“Lo, nature shall move thee; thou must be converted,
Thine own father this night is dead”: this she retorted.

“Now break heart, I thee pray, this corpse lyeth so sadly,
So beaten, so wounded, and treated so foully,
What wight may behold, and weep not? none truly,
To see my dead dear son bleeding, lo thus newly!”

On me she cast her eyes, and said: “See, man, thy brother!”
She kissed him, and said: “Sweet, am I not thy mother?”
And swooning she fell. . . .

The Virgin's song over her dead Son
MS. O.G. Trinity College, Cambridge

* Encheson = reason, motive.

† Bobbed = beaten.

Now on the night when the Lord's day was drawing on, as the soldiers kept guard by two and two in a watch, there was a great voice in heaven, and they saw the heavens opened, and two men descend from thence with much light and draw nigh unto the tomb. And the stone which had been cast at the door rolled away of itself and made way in part, and the tomb was opened, and both the young men entered in. The soldiers, therefore, when they saw it, awakened the centurion and the elders (for they were also there keeping watch): and as they told the things that they had seen, again they see three men coming forth from the tomb, two of them supporting the other, and a Cross following them; and the head of the two reached to heaven, but that of him who was led by them overpassed the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens, saying, Didst thou preach to them that sleep? And a response was heard from the Cross, Yea.

The Gospel of Peter

And can great Nature keep her seat,
And the gay stars lead on their golden dance?

RICHARD CRASHAW [1613(?)–1649]
Sospetto d'Herode

The man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude
Nor sorrow discontent:

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence:

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

THOMAS CAMPION [d. 1620]
From Campion and Rosseter's
Book of Airs [1602]

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content;
The quiet mind is richer than a crown;
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent;
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown;
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

The homely house that harbours quiet rest;
The cottage that affords no pride nor care;
The mean that 'grees with country music best;
The sweet consort of mirth and music's fare;
Obscur'd life sets down a type of bliss:
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

ROBERT GREENE [1560(?)–1592]
Farewell to Folly [1591]

Content; but we will leave this paltry land,
And sail from hence to Greece, to lovely Greece;—
I'll be thy Jason, thou my golden fleece;—
Where painted carpets o'er the meads are hurled,
And Bacchus' vineyards overspread the world;
Where woods and forests go in goodly green,
I'll be Adonis, thou shalt be Love's Queen;—
The meads, the orchards, and the primrose-lanes,
Instead of sedge and reed, bear sugar-canes.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE [1564–1593]
The Jew of Malta

Constant Penelope sends to thee, careless Ulysses!
Write not again, but come, sweet mate, thyself to revive me.
Troy we do much envy, we desolate lost ladies of Greece. . . .

ANON.

*From WILLIAM BYRD's First Book of
Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs [1588]*

She that in chains of pearl and unicorn
Leads at her train the ancient golden world.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?)–1597(?)]
The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe

Teach me to love? go teach thyself more wit;
I chief professor am of it.
Teach craft to Scots, and thrift to Jews;
Teach boldness to the stewes;
In tyrants' courts teach supple flattery;
Teach Jesuits, that have travelled far, to lie;
Teach fire to burn, and winds to blow;
Teach restless fountains how to flow;
Teach the dull earth, fixed, to abide;
Teach womankind in constancy and pride;
See if your diligence here will useful prove,
But prithee, teach not me to love.

ABRAHAM COWLEY [1618-1667]
The Mistress

Thou fair young man, whose hairs shine in mine eye
Like golden wires of David's ivory lute.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?) - 1597(?)]
The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe

h^{oc} duce custodes furtim transgressa iacentes
ad juvenem tenebris sola puella venit,
et pedibus praetemptat iter suspensa timore,
explorat caecas cui manus ante vias.

Tibullus [54-19 B.C.]

II, 1

Translation:

(It is lust) that guides the girl who creeps alone to her lover in the night. Slyly she steps over the prone bodies of her guardians; holding her breath in suspense, she feels with her feet the path that stretches before her, and with hand held in front of her she feels her way along the passage in the dark.

On the death of Henry, Prince of Wales, 1612

His ivory skin, his comely hair,
His rosy cheeks so clear and fair,
Eyes that once did grace
His bright face,
Now in him all want their place.
Eyes and hearts, weep with me,
For who so kind as he?

His youth was like an April flower,
Adorned with beauty, love, and power,
Glory strewed his way,
Whose wreaths gay
Now are all turn'd to decay.
Then, again, weep with me,
None feel more cause than we.

No more may his wished sight return.
His golden lamp no more can burn.
Quenched is all his flame,
His hoped fame
Now hath left him nought but name.
For him all weep with me,
Since more him none shall see.

THOMAS CAMPION [d. 1620]

Climb at Court for me that will
Tottering favour's pinnacle;
All I seek is to lie still,
Settled in some secret nest
In calm leisure let me rest,
And far off the public stage
Pass away my silent age.
Thus, when without noise, unknown,
I have lived out all my span,
I shall die without a groan,
An old honest countryman.
Who exposed to others' eyes
Into his own heart ne'er pries,
Death's to him a strange surprise.

ANDREW MARVELL [1620-1678]
Translated from Seneca

MAY

The night is full of stars, full of magnificence;
Nightingales hold the wood, and fragrance loads the dark,
Behold what fires august, what lights eternal! Hark!
What passionate music poured in passionate love's defence.
Breathe but the wafting wind's nocturnal frankincense!
Only to feel this night's great heart, only to mark
The splendours and the glooms, brings back the patriarch
Who on Chaldaean wastes found God through reverence.

Could we but live at will upon this perfect height,
Could we but always keep the passion of this peace,
Could we but face unshamed the look of this pure light,
Could we but win earth's heart and give desire release,
Then were we all divine, and then were ours by right
These stars, these nightingales, these scents; then shame would
cease.

LIONEL JOHNSON [1867-1902]

'T was when the spousal time of May
Hangs all the hedge with bridal wreaths,
And air's so sweet the bosom gay
Gives thanks for every breath it breathes,
When like to like is gladly moved,
And each thing joins in Spring's refrain,
'Let those love now, who never loved;
Let those who have loved love again;'
That I, in whom the sweet time wrought,
Lay stretch'd within a lonely glade,
Abandon'd to delicious thought
Beneath the softly twinkling shade.
The leaves, all stirring, mimick'd well,
A neighbouring rush of rivers cold,
And, as the sun or shadow fell,
So these were green and those were gold;
In dim recesses hyacinths droop'd,
And breadths of primrose lit the air,
Which, wandering through the woodland, stoop'd
And gather'd perfumes here and there;
Upon the spray the squirrel swung,
And careless songsters, six or seven,
Sang lofty songs the leaves among,
Fit for their only listener, Heaven.

COVENTRY PATMORE [1823-1896]

I bowed my body, beholding all about me,
Saw sun and sea, and the sand of the shore,
Where birds and beasts with their mates wandered,
Wild serpents in the woods and wonderful birds,
Flecked with many a coloured feather;
Man and his mate, Peace and War,
Poverty and plenty, bliss and bitter bale;
And I saw all beasts following Reason,
In eating and drinking and gendering their kind;
Man and his mate alone were Reason-less.
Birds I beheld making nests in the bushes,
I wondered from whom and where the pie learnt
To lay the sticks that lie in her nest,
Hiding and covering that no fool should find;
In marshes on moors in mire and in water
Divers dived. "Dear God," said I,
"Where gat these wild things wit?"

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)—1400(?)]

PIERS PLOWMAN

The Vision of Do-well

The Burial

All the flowers of the spring
Meet to perfume our burying;
These have but their growing prime,
And man does flourish but his time.
Survey our progress from our birth—
We are set, we grow, we turn to earth,
Courts adieu, and all delights,
All bewitching appetites!
Sweetest breath and clearest eye,
Like perfumes go out and die;
And consequently this is done
As shadows wait upon the sun.
Vain the ambition of kings
Who seek by trophies and dead things
To leave a living name behind,
And weave but nets to catch the wind.

JOHN WEBSTER [1580(?)—1623(?)]

The helmet now an hive for bees becomes,
And hilts of swords may serve for spiders' looms;
 Sharp pikes may make
 Teeth for a rake;
And the keen blade, th' arch enemy of life,
Shall be degraded to a pruning knife.
 The rustic spade
 Which first was made
For honest agriculture, shall retake
Its primitive employment, and forsake
 The rampires steep
 And trenches deep.
Tame conies in our brazen guns shall breed,
Or gentle doves their young ones there shall feed.
 In musket barrels
 Mice shall raise quarrels
For their quarters. The ventriloquious drum,
Like lawyers in vacations, shall be dumb.
 Now all recruits,
 But those of fruits,
Shall be forgot; and th' unarmed soldier
Shall only boast of what he did whilere,
 In chimneys' ends
 Among his friends.

RALPH KNEVET [1600-1671]
B.M. MS. add. 27447
The Vote

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;
O time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing!
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain; youth waneth by increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees;
And, lovers' sonnets turned to holy psalms,
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are age his alms:
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
He'll teach his swains this carol for a song—
'Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Curst be the souls that think her any wrong.'
Goddess, allow this aged man his right,
To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

GEORGE PEELE [1538(?)–1597]
Polyhymnia [1590]

ἀλλ' εἰς Ἀκαδήμειαν κατιῶν ὑπὸ ταῖς μορίαις ἀποθρέξει
στεφανωσάμενος καλάμῳ λευκῷ μετὰ σώφρονος ἡλικιώτου
μίλακος ὄζων καὶ ἀπραγμοσύνης καὶ λεύκης φυλλοβολούσης
ἦρος ἐν ὥρᾳ χαίρων ὅπότεν πλάτανος πτελέα ψιθυρίζει.

ARISTOPHANES [448–385 B.C.]

Clouds

Translation:

But you will go down to the Academy and will run races
underneath the olive trees with some clean-minded friend of
your own age: garlanded with the white rush and smelling of
bryony and ease of mind and the white willow tree; happy in
the hour of spring when the plane tree whispers to the elm.

I took money and bought flowering trees
And planted them out on the bank to the east of the Keep.
I simply bought whatever had most blooms,
Not caring whether peach, apricot, or plum.
A hundred fruits, all mixed up together;
A thousand branches, flowering in due rotation.
Each has its season coming early or late;
But to all alike the fertile soil is kind.
The red flowers hang like a heavy mist;
The white flowers gleam like a fall of snow.
The wandering bees cannot bear to leave them;
The sweet birds also come there to roost.
In front there flows an ever-running stream;
Beneath there is built a little flat terrace.
Sometimes I sweep the flagstones of the terrace;
Sometimes, in the wind, I raise my cup and drink.
The flower-branches screen my head from the sun;
The flower-buds fall down into my lap.
Alone drinking, alone singing my songs
I do not notice that the moon is level with the steps.
The people of Pa do not care for flowers;
All the spring no one has come to look.
But their Governor General, alone with his cup of wine
Sits till evening and will not move from the place.

PO CHU-I [A.D. 772-846]
Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

In chrystal towers and turrets richly set
With glitt'ring gems that shine against the sun,
In regal rooms of jasper and of jet,
Content of mind not always likes to won;*
But oftentimes it pleaseth her to stay
In simple cotes enclosed with walls of clay.

*From WILLIAM BYRD'S
Psalms, Songs, and Sonnets [1611]*

* Dwell.

Here is seclusion and stillness with nothing to break the spell;
We follow wherever the boat chooses to drift;
The evening wind wafts it on its way
Entering the mouth of the gorge between flowery paths,
As dusk falls we wind among the western ravines.
Through a break in the hills one can see the Southern Dipper.
The air is heavy with floating mist
The moon among the trees sinks at my back.
The life of the world of men is a boundless waste;
My wish is to spend my days here as a fisherman in wild places.

*CHI WU-CH' IEN [8th Century A.D.]
Floating on the Jo Yeh Stream in Spring
Translated by SOAME JENYNS*

I joy not in no earthly bliss,
I force* not Croesus' wealth a straw;
For care I know not what it is;
I fear not Fortune's fatal law:
My mind is such as may not move
For beauty bright nor force of love.

I wish but what I have at will,
I wander not to seek for more;
I like the plain, I climb no hill;
In greatest storms, I sit on shore
And laugh at them that toil in vain
To get what must be lost again.

I kiss not where I wish to kill;
I feign not love where most I hate;
I break no sleep to win my will;
I wait not at the mighty's gate;
I scorn no poor, nor fear no rich;
I feel no want, nor have too much.

The court and cart I like nor loath.
Extremes are counted worst of all;
The golden mean, between them both
Doth surest sit and fears no fall.
This is my choice: for why? I find
No wealth is like the quiet mind.

*From WILLIAM BYRD'S
Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs of
Sadness and Piety [1588]*

Force = regard, esteem.

I. x

Ah quante ninfe per lui sospiornò!
Ma fu sì altero sempre il giovinetto,
Che mai le ninfe amanti nol piegorno,
Mai potè riscaldarsi il freddo petto.
Facea sovente pe'boschi soggiorno,
Inculto sempre e rigido in aspetto;
E 'l volto difendea dal solar raggio
Con ghirlanda di pino o verde faggio.

* * *

I. xlii

Candida è ella, e candida la vesta;
Ma pur di rose e fior dipinta e d'erba:
Lo inanellato crin dell'aurea testa
Scende in la fronte umilmente superba.
Ridegli attorno tutta la foresta,
E quanto può sue cure disacerba;
Nell'atto regalmente è mansueta;
E pur col ciglio le tempeste acqueta.

* * *

I. xliv

Folgoron gli occhi d'un dolce sereno,
Ove sue face tien Cupido ascoso;
L'aer d'intorno si fa tutto ameno,
Ovunque gira le luci amorose.
Di celeste letizia il volto ha pieno,
Dolce dipinto di ligustri e rose,
Ogni aura tace al suo parlar divino,
E canta ogni augelletto in suo latino.

* * *

I. xlvii

Ell'era assisa sopra la verdura
 Allegra, e ghirlandetta avea contesta
 Di quanti fior creasse mai natura,
 De' quali era dipinta la sua vesta.
 E come prima al giovan pose cura,
 Alquanto paurosa alzò la testa:
 Poi con la bianca man ripreso il lembo,
 Levossi in piè con di fior pien un grembo.

ANGELO POLIZIANO [1454-1494]

From La Giostra

See p. 242 for Translation

Thyrsis and Milla, arm in arm together,
In merry may-time to the green garden walked,
Where all the way they wanton riddles talked;
The youthful boy, kissing her cheeks so rosy,
Beseech'd her there to gather him a posy.
She straight her light green silken coats uptucked
And may for Mill and thyme for Thyrsis plucked;
Which when she brought, he clasp'd her by the middle
And kiss'd her sweet, but could not read her riddle.
"Ah fool!" with that the nymph set up a laughter,
And blush'd, and ran away, and he ran after.

*From THOMAS MORLEY'S
First Book of Airs [1600]*

Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona

DANTE [1265-1321]
Inferno, V, 103

Translation:

Love which to no loved one gives respite from loving

Nullam invenies quae parcat amanti;

JUVENAL [A.D. 60-140]
Satire VI

Translation:

You will never find a woman who spares her lover.

Nocte quidem, sed Luna videt, sed sidera testes intendunt
oculos.

JUVENAL
Satire VIII

Translation:

Yes, it may be night; but remember that the moon sees what
is happening; remember that the stars strain their eyes to watch.

Aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox,
furtivos hominum vident amores.

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]
VII

Translation:

or as many as are the stars, when night is hushed, which see
the furtive loves of men.

See, see, mine own sweet jewel,
What I have for my darling:
A robin-redbreast and a starling.
These I give both in hope to move thee;
Yet thou say'st I do not love thee.

ANON.

From THOMAS MORLEY'S
Canzonets [1593]

Ella cantava; e il puro canto rendeva pure tutte le cose.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO [1863-1938]
Il peccato di maggio

Translation:

She sang; and her pure song made all things seem pure.

A lapis est ferrumque, suam quicumque puellam
verberat: e caelo deripit ille deos.

Tibullus [54-19 B.C.]
I, X

Translation:

Ah! the boy who beats his girl is made of stone or iron: he
drags the gods down from the sky.

A Wooing Song of a Yeoman of Kent's Son

I have house and land in Kent,
And if you'll love me, love me now;
Twopence-halfpenny is my rent,
I cannot come every day to woo.

I am my father's eldest son,
My mother eke doth love me well,
For I can bravely clout my shoon,
And I full well can ring a bell.

My father he gave me a hog,
My mother she gave me a sow;
I have a God-father dwells thereby,
And he on me bestowed a plow.

One time I gave thee a paper of pins,
Another time a tawdry-lace;
And if thou wilt not grant me love,
In truth I die before thy face.

I have been twice our Whitson-lord,
I have had ladies many fair,
And eke thou hast my heart in hold
And in my mind seems passing rare.

I will put on my best white slops
And I will wear my yellow hose,
And on my head a good grey hat,
And in't I stick a lovely rose.

Wherefore cease off, make no delay,
And if you'll love me, love me now
Or else I seek some otherwhere,
For I cannot come every day to woo.

From Melismata [1611]

In Anna's wars immortal Churchill rose,
And, great in arms, subdu'd Britannia's foes:
A greater Churchill now demands our praise,
And the palm yields to the poetic bays:
Tho' John fought nobly at his army's head,
And slew his thousands with the balls of lead;
Yet must the hero to the bard submit,
Who hurls, unmatch'd, the thunderbolt of wit.

The Parallel:

*Between the Illustrious John Churchill, Duke of
Marlborough, and the Rev. Charles Churchill,
Poet*

ANON.

*From the Festoon, a collection of Epigrams
[1766]*

P rogeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci
audierat, Tyrias olim quae verterat arces;
hinc populum late regem belloque superbum
venturum excidio Libyae;

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]

Aeneid, I, 18

Translation:

Since she had heard that a race was springing from Trojan
blood which one day would overthrow the Tyrian towers;
and from them would rise a people of wide empire, proud in
war, who would cause the fall of Libya.

Syracusa being taken, nothinge greved Marcellus more than the losse of Archimedes, who beinge in his studie when the citie was taken, busily seeking out by him selfe the demonstracion of some Geometricall proposition which he hadde drawen in figure, and so earnestly occupied therein, as he neither sawe nor hearde any noyse of enemies that ranne uppe and downe the citie, and much lesse knewe it was taken: He wondered when he sawe a souldier by him, that bad him go with him to Marcellus. Notwithstadyng, he spoke to the souldier, and had him tary untill he had done his conclusion, and brought it to demonstracion: but the souldier being angry with his aunswer, drew out his sword and killed him.

PLUTARCH [A.D. c. 50-125]

Lives

Translated by SIR THOMAS NORTH [1572]

JUNE

Mark Antony

When as the nightingale chanted her vespers
And the wild forester crouched on the ground,
Venus invited me in th' evening whispers
Unto a fragrant field with roses crowned,
Where she before had sent
My wishes complement;
Unto my heart's content
Played with me on the green.
Never Mark Antony
Dallied more wantonly
With the fair Egyptian Queen.

Mystical grammar of amorous glances;
Feeling of pulses, the physic of love;
Rhetorical courtings and musical dances;
Numbering of kisses arithmetic prove;
Eyes like astronomy;
Straight-limbed geometry;
In her art's ingeny
Our wits were sharp and keen.
Never Mark Antony
Dallied more wantonly
With the fair Egyptian Queen.

JOHN CLEVELAND [1613-1658]

In time the strong and stately turrets fall,
In time the rose and silver lilies die.
In time the monarchs captives are and thrall,
In time the sea and rivers are made dry;
The hardest flint in time doth melt asunder;
Still living fame in time doth fade away;
The mountains proud we see in time come under;
And earth, for age, we see in time decay.
The sun in time forgets for to retire
From out the east where he was wont to rise;
The basest thoughts we see in time aspire,
And greedy minds, in time do wealth despise,
Thus all, sweet Fair, in time must have an end,
Except thy beauty, virtues, and thy friend.

GILES FLETCHER (the elder) [1549-1611]
Licia [1593]

Candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi
Sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Eclogue, V, 56

Translation:

White Daphnis wonders at Olympus' unfamiliar threshold and
sees the stars and clouds below his feet.

So passeth in the passing of a day,
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre;
No more doth flourish after first decay.
That earst was sought to deck both bed and bowre
Of many a lady', and many a Paramowre.
Gather therefore the Rose whilst yet is prime,
For soon comes age that will her pride deflowre;
Gather the Rose of Love whilst yet is time,
Whilst loving thou mayest loved be with equal crime.

EDMUND SPENSER [1552(?)–1599]
Faerie Queene, Book II, XII, 75

Qui legitis flores et humi nascentia fraga,
frigidus, o pueri, fugite hinc, latet anguis in herba.

VIRGIL [70–19 B.C.]
Eclogue, III, 92

Translation:

You lads who pick flowers here and the creeping strawberry,
you better run away. A cold snake lurks in the grass.

When in the woods I wander all alone,
The woods that are my solace and delight,
Which I more covet than a prince's throne,
My toil by day, and canopy by night;
(Light heart, light foot, light food, and slumber light,
These lights shall light us to old age's gate;
While monarchs, whom rebellious dreams affright,
Heavy with fear, death's fearful summons wait;)
Whilst here I wander, pleased to be alone,
Weighing in thought the world's no-happiness,
I cannot choose but wonder at its moan,
Since so plain joys the woody life can bless:
Then live who may where honied words prevail.
I with the deer, and with the nightingale!

EDWARD, LORD THURLOW [1731-1806]

Midnight was come, and every vital thing
With sweet sound sleep their weary limbs did rest,
The beasts were still, the little birds that sing,
Now sweetly slept beside their mother's breast,
The old and all well shrouded in their nest;
 The waters calm, the cruel seas did cease,
 The woods, the fields, and all things held their peace.

The golden stars were whirl'd amid their race,
And on the earth did with their twinkling light,
When each thing nestled in his resting-place,
Forget day's pain with pleasure of the night;
The hare had not the greedy hounds in sight,
 The fearful deer of death stood not in doubt,
 The partridge dreamt not of the falcon's foot.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST [1536-1608]

From the Complaint of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham

Gaze not on swans in whose soft breast
A full-hatched beauty seems to nest,
Nor snow which, falling from the sky,
Hovers in its virginity.

Gaze not on roses, though new-blown,
Graced with a fresh complexion,
Nor lilies which no subtle bee
Hath robbed by kissing-chemistry.

For if my emperess appears,
Swans moulting die, snow melts to tears,
Roses do blush and hang their heads,
Pale lilies shrink into their beds.

So have I seen stars big with light
Prove lanterns to the moon-eyed night.
Which, when Sol's rays were once displayed,
Sank in their sockets and decayed.

HENRY NOEL

H. Lawes' Airs and Dialogues [1653]

Come out and climb the garden path
Luriana, Lurilee.

The China rose is all abloom
And buzzing with the yellow bee.
We'll swing you on the cedar bough,
Luriana, Lurilee.

I wonder if it seems to you,
Luriana, Lurilee,
That all the lives we ever lived
And all the lives to be,
Are full of trees and changing leaves,
Luriana, Lurilee.

How long it seems since you and I,
Luriana, Lurilee,
Roamed in the forest where our kind
Had just begun to be,
And laughed and chattered in the flowers,
Luriana, Lurilee.

How long since you and I went out,
Luriana, Lurilee,
To see the Kings go riding by
Over lawn and daisy lea,
With their palm leaves and cedar sheaves,
Luriana, Lurilee.

Swing, swing, swing on a bough,
Luriana, Lurilee,
Till you sleep in a humble heap
Or under a gloomy churchyard tree,
And then fly back to swing on a bough,
Luriana, Lurilee.

CHARLES ELTON [1839-1900]
(*Hitherto unpublished*)

My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
That earth affords or grows by kind.
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
No shape to feed a loving eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall,
For why my mind doth serve for all.

I see how plenty suffers oft,
And hasty climbers soon do fall;
I see that those which are aloft
Mishap doth threaten most of all;
They get with toil, they keep with fear;
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content I live, this is my stay—
I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look, what I lack my mind supplies:
Lo! thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor, though much they have,
And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss;
I grudge not at another's gain;
Nor worldly waves my mind can toss;
My state at one doth still remain:
I fear no foe, I fawn no friend;
I loathe not life, nor dread my end.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will;
Their treasure is their only trust,
A cloak'd craft their store of skill:
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
My conscience clear my choice defence;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence:
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I!

SIR EDWARD DYER [c. 1540-1607]
Bodley MS. Rawl. Poet 85
(*Variant in W. BYRD's Psalms, Sonnets, and*
Songs [1588])

Tristisque lupini
sustuleris fragilis calamos silvamque sonantem.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Georgics I, 75

Translation:

And you will pick off the fragile stalks of the sad lupin with its
tangle of rattling seed-pods.

I live, and yet methinks I do not breathe;
I thirst and drink, I drink and thirst again;
I sleep and yet do dream I am awake;
I hope for that I have; I have and want:
I sing and sigh; I love and hate at once.
O, tell me, restless soul, what uncouth jar
Doth cause in store such want, in peace such war?

There is a jewel which no Indian mines
Can buy, no chymic art can counterfeit;
It makes men rich in greatest poverty;
Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold,
The homely whistle to sweet music's strain;
Seldom it comes, to few from heaven sent,
That much in little, all in nought—Content.

*From JOHN WILBYE'S Second Set of
Madrigals [1609]*

Since I from love escapēd am so fat,
I never think to been in his prison lean;
Since I am free, I count him not a bean.

He may answer, and say this and that,
I do no fors,* I speak right as I mean,
Since I from love escapēd am so fat.

Love hath my name i-struck out of his sclat,
And he is struck out of my bookēs clean:
For ever more there is none other mean,
Since I from love escapēd am so fat.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]

* I don't care.

Think not it was those colours, red and white,
Laid but on flesh that could affect me so,
But something else, which thought holds under lock
And hath no key of words to open it.
They are the smallest pieces of the mind
That pass the narrow organ of the voice;
The great remain behind in that vast orb
Of the apprehension, and are never born.

MICHAEL DRAYTON [1563-1631]

If all fail, we'll put on our proudest arms,
And pouring on Heaven's face the Sea's huge flood,
Quench his curled fires; we'll wake with our alarms
Ruin, when'er she sleeps at Nature's feet,
And crush the world till His wide corners meet.

RICHARD CRASHAW [1613 (?)–1649]
Sospetto d'Herode

Sails hoisted there, struck here; and anchors laid
In Thames which were at Tygris and Euphrates weighed.

JOHN DONNE [1572–1631]
From The Progress of the Soul

Arma quidem ultra
litora Juvænae promovimus et modo captas
Orcadas ac minima contentos nocte Britannos;
sed quæ nunc populi fiunt victoris in urbe,
non faciunt illi quos vincimus.

JUVENAL [A.D. 60-140]
Satire III

Translation:

Our arms indeed have been pushed beyond the shores of Ireland, beyond the newly conquered Orkneys, beyond the British lands in which the night is short: but never will the peoples whom we have conquered acquire the same mode of life as we enjoy in conquering Rome.

So, in its lovely moonlight, lives the soul.
Mountains surround it, and sweet virgin air;
Cold plashing, past it crystal waters roll;
We visit it by moments, ah! too rare.

Men will renew the battle in the plain
To-morrow; red with blood will Xanthus be;
Hector and Ajax will be there again;
Helen will come upon the wall to see.

MATTHEW ARNOLD [1822-1888]

The nodding oxeye bends before the wind,
The woodbine quakes lest boys their flowers should find,
And prickly dogrose spite of its array
Can't dare the blossom-seeking hand away,
While thistles wear their heavy knobs of bloom
Proud as a warhorse wears its haughty plume,
And by the roadside danger's self defy;
On commons where pined sheep and oxen lie
In ruddy pomp and ever thronging mood
It stands and spreads like danger in a wood,
And in the village street where meanest weeds
Can't stand untouched to fill their husks with seeds,
The haughty thistle oer all danger towers,
In every place the very wasp of flowers.

JOHN CLARE [1793-1864]
The Fear of Flowers

Upon the Snail

She goes but softly, but she goeth sure;
She stumbles not as stronger creatures do:
Her journey's shorter, so she may endure
Better than they which do much further go.

She makes no noise, but stilly seizeth on
The flower or herb appointed for her food,
The which she quietly doth feed upon,
While others range, and gare,* but find no good.

And though she doth but very softly go,
However 'tis not fast, nor slow, but sure;
And certainly they that do travel so,
The prize they do aim at, they do procure.

JOHN BUNYAN [1628-1688]
A Book for Boys and Girls [1686]

* Gare = stare about.

I love at early morn, from new mown swath,
To see the startled frog his route pursue;
To mark while, leaping oer the dripping path,
His bright sides scatter dew,
The early lark that, from its bustle flies,
To hail his matin new;
And watch him to the skies:

To note on hedgerow baulks, in moisture sprent,
The jetty snail creep from the mossy thorn,
With earnest heed, and tremulous intent,
Frail brother of the morn,
That from the tiny bents and misted leaves
Withdraws his timid horn,
And fearful vision weaves:

JOHN CLARE [1793-1864]
From Summer Images

When creatures first were formed,
They had by Nature's laws
The bulls, their horns; the horses, hoofs;
The lions, teeth and paws;
To hares she swiftness gave;
To fishes fins assigned;

To birds, their wings; so no defence
Was left for womankind.
But, to supply that want,
She gave her such a face
Which makes the bold, the fierce, the swift,
To stoop and plead for grace.

GEFFREY WHITNEY [1548(?)–1601(?)]
Emblems and Other Devices [1586]

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
rumoresque senum severiorum
omnes unius aestimemus assis.
soles occidere et redire possunt:
nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux
nox est perpetua una dormienda.
da mi basia mille, deinde centum . . .

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]

V

Translation:

Let us live, my Lesbia, and love. And let us count not worth a farthing the grumbles of the glum old men. Suns may set and suns may rise, but for us, Lesbia, when once our short light is set, there is just one long lasting night that we must sleep. So give me a thousand kisses and then a hundred. . . .

Forsitan et pinguis hortos quae cura colendi
ornaret canerem, biferique rosaria Paestum.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Georgics, IV, 118

Translation:

And I might sing perhaps of all the toil which goes to the
tending of rich gardens, and of the roses of Paestum which
bloom twice a year.

Tantus amor florum et generandi gloria mellis.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Georgics, IV, 205

Translation:

Such is their love of flowers and the glory which they find in
building honey.

JULY

On a Wet Summer

All ye, who far from town, in rural hall,
Like me, were wont to dwell near pleasant field,
Enjoying all the sunny day did yield,
With me the change lament, in irksome thrall,
By rains incessant held; for now no call
From early swain invites my hand to wield
The scythe; in parlour dim I sit concealed,
And mark the lessening sand from hour-glass fall;
Or 'neath my window view the wistful train
Of dripping poultry, whom the vine's broad leaves
Shelter no more.—Mute is the mournful plain,
Silent the swallow sits beneath the thatch,
And vacant hind hangs pensive o'er his hatch,
Counting the frequent drop from reeded eaves.

JOHN BAMPFYLDE [1754-1796]
Sixteen Sonnets [1778]

O Southern Wind!
Long hast thou lingered 'mid those islands fair
Which lie like jewels on the Indian deep,
Or green waves, all asleep,
Fed by the summer suns and azure air—
O sweetest Southern Wind!
Wilt thou not now unbind
Thy dark and crownèd hair?

Wilt thou not unloose now
In this, the bluest of all hours,
Thy passion-coloured flowers;
And, shaking the fine fragrance from thy brow,
Kiss our girls' laughing lips and youthful eyes,
And all that world of love which lower lies,
Breathing, and warm, and white, purer than snow?
O thou sweet Southern Wind!
Come to me and unbind
The languid blossoms which oppress thy brow.

We, whom the northern blast
Blows on from night to morn, from morn to eve,
Hearing thee, sometimes grieve
That our brief summer days not long must last;
And yet, perhaps, 'twere well
We should not ever dwell
With thee, sweet spirit of the sunny south,
But touch thy odorous mouth
Once—and be gone unto our blasts again,
And their bleak welcome, and our wintry snow;
And arm us, by enduring, for that pain
Which the bad world sends forth, and all its woe.

CHARLES LAMB [1775-1834]
The Poetical Scrap Book [1824]

And they (methinks) deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, and buzz, and murmurings
Of this great hive, the City.

Ah! yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too.

Oh Fountains, when in you shall I
Myself, eased of unpeaceful thoughts, espy?
Oh Fields, oh Woods, when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?

ABRAHAM COWLEY [1618-1667]
The Mistress, "The Wish"

And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,
Among the rocks and winding scars;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
Peter Bell

Crowned with flowers, I saw fair Amaryllis
By Thyrsis sit, hard by a fount of crystal,
And with her hand more white than snow or lilies
On sand she wrote "My faith shall be immortal,"
And suddenly a storm of wind and weather
Blew all her faith and sand away together.

ANON.
*From WILLIAM BYRD's Second Book of
Songs and Sonnets [1611]*

I care not for these ladies
That must be wooed and prayed,
Give me kind Amaryllis,
The wanton country maid:
Nature art disdaineth,
Her beauty is her own:
Her when we court and kiss,
She cries "Forsooth, let go!"
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say "No."

If I love Amaryllis,
She gives me fruit and flowers;
But if we love these ladies,
We must give golden showers.
Give them gold that sell love,
Give me the nut-brown lass,
Who when we court and kiss,
She cries "Forsooth, let go!"
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say "No."

These ladies must have pillows
And beds by strangers wrought;
Give me a bower of willows,
Of moss and leaves unbought;
And fresh Amaryllis,
With milk and honey fed,
Who when we court and kiss,
She cries "Forsooth, let go!"
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say "No."

THOMAS CAMPION [*d.* 1620]
From CAMPION AND ROSSETER'S *Book of*
Airs [1601]

*The lover showeth how he is forsaken of such as he
sometime enjoyed*

They flee from me that sometime did me seek,
With naked foot stalking within my chamber:
Once have I seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild, and do not once remember
That sometime they have put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking in continual change.

Thank'd be fortune, it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once especial,
In thin array, after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown did from her shoulders fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small,
And therewithal so sweetly did me kiss,
And softly said, "Dear heart, how like you this?"

SIR THOMAS WYATT [1503(?)–1542]
Tottel's Songs and Sonnets [1557]

I wish no rich refined Arabian gold,
Nor Orient Indian pearl, rare nature's wonder;
No diamonds the Egyptian surges under,
No rubies of America, dear sold,
Nor sapphires which rich Afric's sands enfold,
Treasures far distant from this isle asunder;
Barbarian ivories in contempt I hold;
But only this, this only, Venus, grant—
That I my sweet Parthenope may get.
Her hairs no grace of golden tires want,
Pure pearls with perfect rubines are inset,
True diamonds in eyes, sapphires in veins,
Nor can I that soft ivory skin forget.
England, in one small subject, such contains.

BARNABE BARNES [1569-1609]

Let us go, then, exploring
This summer morning,
When all are adoring
The plum-blossom and the bee.
And humming and hawing
Let us ask of the starling
What he may think
On the brink
Of the dust-bin whence he picks
Among the sticks
Combings of scullion's hair.
What's life, we ask;
Life, Life, Life! cries the bird
As if he had heard. . . .

VIRGINIA WOOLF [1882-1941]

Drink to me with thine eyes alone; and, if thou wilt, apply thy lips and fill the cup with kisses, and so give it to me. When I behold thee, I thirst, even with the cup in my hands; and it is not this that I touch with my lips, but I know that I drink of thee. I have sent thee a wreath of roses, not to honour thee (though this too was in my mind), but out of favour to the roses themselves, that so they may not wither. And if thou wilt do a favour to thy lover, send back what remains of them, smelling no longer of roses, but only of thee."

Philostratus "the Athenian" [c. A.D. 170-245]
Love-letters, xxlv

Many were the wit-combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion, and an English man of war: Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning; solid, but slow, in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.

THOMAS FULLER [1608-1661]
on Shakespeare
Worthies of England

Take down thy best tuned lyre
Whose sound shall pierce so far
It shall strike out the star
Which fabulous Greece durst fix in heaven.

From an ode to Ben Jonson, possibly by Cleveland

To the Memory of Ben Jonson

The Muses' fairest light in no dark time;
The wonder of a learned age; the line
Which none can pass; the most proportioned wit,
To nature, the best judge of what was fit;
The deepest, plainest, highest, clearest pen;
The voice most echoed by consenting men:
The soul which answered best to all well said
By others, and which most requital made;
Tuned to the highest key of ancient Rome.
Returning all her music with his own,
In whom with nature study claimed a part,
And yet who to himself owed all his art:
Here lies Ben Jonson! Every age will look
With sorrow here, with wonder on his book.

ANON.

*(These lines have been attributed, probably
inaccurately, to John Cleveland)*

O from what ground of nature
Doth the pelican,
That self-devouring creature
Prove so forward
And untoward,
Her vitals for to strain!
And why the subtle fox, while in death's wounds a-lying,
Do not lament his pangs by howling and by crying,
And why the milk-swan doth sing when she's a-dying—
Hallo my fancy, whither wilt thou go?

To know this world's centre
Height, depth, breadth and length,
Fain would I adventure
To search the hid attractions
Of magnetic actions
And adamant strength.
Fain would I know, if in some lofty mountain,
Where the moon sojourns, if there be tree or fountain;
If there be beasts of prey, or yet be fields to hunt in—
Hallo my fancy, whither wilt thou go?

WILLIAM CLELAND [d. 1689]

Of cord and cassia-wood is the harp compounded:
Within it lie ancient melodies.

Ancient melodies—weak and savourless,
Not appealing to present men's taste.
Light and colour are faded from the jade stops:
Dust has covered the rose-red strings.
Decay and ruin came to it long ago,
But the sound that is left is still cold and clear.
I do not refuse to play it, if you want me to:
But even if I play, people will not listen.

* * * *

How did it come to be neglected so?
Because of the Ch'iang flute and the Ch'in flageolet.*

PO CHU-I [A.D. 772-846]
Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

* Barbarous modern instruments.

For goddes speken in amphibologyes
And, for a sooth, they tellen twenty lyes.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
Troilus and Criseyde

To whom the Palmer thus:—"The donghill kinde
Delightes in filth and fowle incontinence;
Let Gryll be Gryll and have his hoggish mind."

EDMUND SPENSER [1552(?)–1599]
Faerie Queene, Book II, 12, LXXXVII

Libertate opus est. Non hac, ut quisque Velina
Publius emeruit, scabiosum tesserula far
possidet. Heu steriles veri, quibus una Quiritem
vertigo facit.

PERSIUS [A.D. 34–62]
Satire V

Translation:

What we need is true Liberty. Not merely the right of any Tom, Dick or Harry who registers at the local food office to get a coupon for a lousy loaf of bread. How empty of all truth are those who imagine that one can become a Roman gentleman merely by a twirl of the thumb!

Who makes his seat a stately stamping steed
- Whose neighs and plays are princely to behold;
Whose courage stout, whose eyes are fiery red,
Whose joints well-knit, whose harness all of gold,
Doth well deserve to be no meaner thing
Than Persian knight, whose horse made him a King.

ANON.

*From WILLIAM BYRD'S First Book of Psalms, Sonnets,
and Songs [1588]*

Quis dabit historico quantum daret acta legenti?

JUVENAL [A.D. 60-140]
Satire VII

Translation:

How can a historian expect to get as much money as the
announcer who reads the News?

Le dormeur du val

C'est un trou de verdure où chante une rivière
Accrochant follement aux herbes des haillons
D'argent, où le soleil, de la montagne fière,
Luit; c'est un petit val qui mousse de rayons.

Un soldat jeune, bouche ouverte, tête nue
Et la nuque baignant dans le frais cresson bleu,
Dort: il est étendu dans l'herbe, sous la nue,
Pâle dans son lit vert où la lumière pleut.

Les pieds dans les glaïeuls, il dort. Souriant comme
Sourirait un enfant malade, il fait un somme.
Nature, berce-le chaudement: il a froid!

Les parfums ne font pas frissonner sa narine;
Il dort dans le soleil, la main sur sa poitrine
Tranquille. Il a deux trous rouges au côté droit.

ARTHUR RIMBAUD [1854-1891]

See p. 244 for translation

I am: yet what I am none cares or knows,
My friends forsake me like a memory lost;
I am the self-consumer of my woes,
They rise and vanish in oblivious host,
Like shades in love and death's oblivion lost;
And yet I am, and live with shadows tost

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life nor joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
And e'en the dearest—that I loved the best—
Are strange—nay, rather stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod;
A place where woman never smiled or wept;
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept;
Untroubling and untroubled where I lie;
The grass below—above the vaulted sky.

JOHN CLARE [1793-1864]

They that lay broken legged, sitting to beg silver,
On soft warm Sundays by the high way.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)—1400(?)]
PIERS PLOWMAN
The Vision of Piers Counsel

AUGUST

The Eastern Suburbs

For the whole year I have been cooped up in my office;
Now outside the walls the country lies silent in the dawn.
The wind sighs quietly in the willows,
The blue hills calm my thoughts.
Amidst leafy boughs I pass the hours
Or pace the banks of a mountain stream.
A gentle rain veils the fragrant plain.
Whence is the spring turtle dove calling?
I love this peace but can seldom attain it,
Those who follow the world must hurry their footsteps.
In the end I will give up my post and here build my hut
Henceforth to imitate the example of T'ao Yüan-ming.

WEI YING-WU [8th Century A.D.]
Translated by SOAME JENYNS

How lovely is the heaven of this night,
How deadly still its earth! The forest brute
Has crept into his cave, and laid himself
Where sleep has made him harmless like the lamb.
The horrid snake, his venom now forgot,
Is still and innocent as the honied flower
Under his head: and man, in whom are met
Leopard and snake, and all the gentleness
And beauty of the young lamb and the bud,
Has let his ghost out, put his thoughts aside
And lent his senses unto death himself.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES [1798-1851]
Fragments of Death's Jest-book

Look how the pale queen of the silent night
Doth cause the ocean to attend upon her,
And he, as long as she is in his sight,
With his full tide is ready her to honour:
But when the silver wagon of the moon
Is mounted up so high he cannot follow,
The sea calls home his crystal waves to wone,*
And with low ebb doth manifest his sorrow.
So you, that are the sovereign of my heart,
Have all my joys attending on your will:
My joys low ebbing when you do depart,
When you return, their tide my heart doth fill.
So as you come, and as you do depart,
Joys ebb and flow within my tender heart.

CHARLES BEST [*fl.* 1602]
Of the Moon

* Wone = dwell. Variant, (?)moan.

Oh, it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or listening to the tide, with closed sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE [1772-1834]
Fancy in Nubibus or The Poet in the Clouds

*My little wandering sportful soul,
Guest, and companion of my body,*
had liberty to wander through all places, and to survey and
reckon all the rooms and all the volumes of the heavens . . .

JOHN DONNE [1572-1631]
From Ignatius his Conclave

Je te salue, ô terre, ô terre porte-grains,
Porte-or, porte-santé, porte-habits, porte-humains,
Porte-fruits, porte-tours, alme, belle, immobile,
Patiente, diverse, odorante, fertile,
Vêtue d'un manteau tout damassé de fleurs,
Passementé de flots, bigarré de couleurs.
Je te salue, ô cœur, racine, base ronde.
Pied du grand animal qu'on appelle le Monde.

GUILLAUME DE SALUSTE DU BARTAS [1544-1590]
"La Semaine" [1578]
extract from Le Troisième Jour, Eloge de la Terre

Oh what unusual heats are here,
Which thus our sunburned meadows sear!
The grasshopper its pipe gives o'er,
And hamstringed frogs can dance no more.
But in the brook the green frog wades,
And grasshoppers seek out the shades,
Only the snake, that kept within,
Now glitters in its second skin.

ANDREW MARVELL [1620-1678]
From Damon the Mower

The Two Swans

And bright and silvery the willows sleep
Over the shady verge—no mad winds tease
Their hoary heads; but quietly they weep
Their sprinkling leaves—half fountains and half trees:
There lilies be—and fairer than all these,
A solitary Swan her breast of snow
Launches against the wave that seems to freeze
Into a chaste reflection, still below,
Twin-shadow of herself wherever she may go.

THOMAS HOOD [1799–1845]

The shadows now so long do grow
That brambles like tall cedars grow;
Molehills seem mountains, and the ant
Appears a monstrous elephant.
A very little, little flock
Shades thrice the ground that it would stock,
Whilst the small stripling following them
Appears a mighty Polythème.

CHARLES COTTON [1630-1687]

At liquidi fontes et stagna virentia musco
adsint et tenuis fugiens per gramina rivus.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Georgics, IV, 17.

Translation:

But let there be wet springs and pools green with moss and a
slim stream slipping through the grass.

By the sad purling of some rivulet
O'er which the bending yew and willow grow,
That scarce the glimmerings of the day permit
To view the melancholy banks below,
Where dwells no noise but what the murmurs make,
When the unwilling stream the shade forsakes.

APHRA BEHN [1640-1689]

Pro molli viola, pro purpureo narcisso
carduus et spinis surgit paliurus acutis.

VIRGIL [70-19 B.C.]
Eclogue, V, 39

Translation:

In place of the soft violet, in place of the purple narcissus,
comes the thistle and the Christ's thorn with its sharp spikes.

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks and gapes for drink again;
The plants suck in the earth, and are
With constant drinking fresh and fair;
The sea itself (which one would think
Should have but little need of drink)
Drinks twice ten thousand rivers up,
So fill'd that they o'erflow the cup.
The busy Sun (and one would guess
By's drunken, fiery face no less)
Drinks up the sea, and when he's done,
The Moon and Stars drink up the Sun:
They drink and dance by their own light,
They drink and revel all the night:
Nothing in Nature's sober found,
But an eternal health goes round.
Fill up the bowl, then, fill it high,
Fill all the glasses there—for why
Should every creature drink but I?
Why, man of morals, tell me why?

ABRAHAM COWLEY [1618-1667]

Far from the town (where all is whist and still,
Save that the sea, playing on yellow sand,
Sends forth a rattling murmur to the land. . . .

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE [1564-1593]
Hero and Leander

Bethsabe Bathing

Hot sun, cool fire, tempered with sweet air,
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white hair:
Shine, sun; burn, fire; breathe, air, and ease me;
Black'shade, fair nurse, shroud me and please me:
Shadow, my sweet nurse, keep me from burning.
Make not my glad cause cause of mourning.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?)-1597(?)]
The Love of King David and Queen Bethsabe

Apporte les cristaux dorés,
Et les verres couleur de songe;
Et que notre amour se prolonge
Dans les parfums exaspérés.

Des roses! Des roses encor!
Je les adore à la souffrance.
Elles ont la sombre attirance
Des choses qui donnent la mort.

L'été d'or croule dans les coupes;
Le jus des pêches que tu coupes
Eclabousse ton sein neigeux.

Le parc est sombre comme un gouffre. . . .
Et c'est dans mon cœur orageux
Comme un mal de douceur qui souffre.

ALBERT SAMAIN [1858-1900]
Le Jardin de l'Infante

(A Head comes up with the ears of corn, and she
combs them into her lap.)

Gently dip, but not too deep,
For fear you make the golden beard to weep
Fair maiden, white and red,
Comb me smooth and stroke my head,
And thou shalt have some cockell-bread.

(A second Head comes up full of gold, which she
combs into her lap.)

Gently dip, but not too deep,
For fear thou make the golden beard to weep.
Fair maid, white and red,
Comb me smooth and stroke my head,
And every hair a sheaf shall be,
And every sheaf a golden tree.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?)-1597(?)]
Old Wives' Tale [c. 1593]

By the very right of your senses you enjoy the World. Is not the beauty of the Hemisphere present to your eye? Doth not the glory of the Sun pay tribute to your sight? Is not the vision of the World an amiable thing? Do not the stars shed influences to perfect the Air? Is not that a marvellous body to breathe in? To visit the lungs: repair the spirits, revive the senses, cool the blood, fill the empty spaces between the Earth and Heavens; and yet give liberty to all objects? Prize these first; and you shall enjoy the residue: Glory, Dominion, Power, Wisdom, Honour, Angels, Souls, Kingdoms, Ages.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]
Centuries of Meditations

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood;
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770–1850]
Resolution and Independence

As on my bed at dawn I mused and pray'd,
I saw my lattice pranked upon the wall,
The flaunting leaves and flitting birds withal—
A sunny phantom interlaced with shade;
“Thanks be to heaven,” in happy mood I said,
“What sweeter aid my matins could befall
Than this fair glory from the East hath made?
What holy sleights hath God, the Lord of all,
To bid us feel and see! we are not free
To say we see not, for the glory comes
Nightly and daily, like the flowing sea;
His lustre pierceth through the midnight glooms
And, at prime hour, behold! He follows me
With golden shadows to my secret rooms!”

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER [1808–1879]
(Brother of Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

The Sun is the eye of the world; and he is indifferent to the Negro or the cold Russian, to them that dwell under the line, and them that stand near the Tropics, the scalded Indian or the poor boy that shakes at the foot of the Riphean hills. . . . And some have only a dark day and a long night from him, snows and white cattle, a miserable life, and a perpetual harvest of catarrhs and consumptions, apoplexies and dead palsies. But some have splendid fires and aromatic spices, rich wines and well-digested fruits, great wits and great courage, because they dwell in his eye and look in his face, and are the Courtiers of the Sun, and wait upon him in his chambers of the East.

JEREMY TAYLOR [1613-1667]
Discourse of Friendship

The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught
To be as bold and forward as he ought;
The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.
Ah, happy designation, prudent choice,
The event is sure; expect it, and rejoice!
Soon see your wish fulfilled in either child,
The pert made perter, and the tame made wild.

WILLIAM COWPER [1731-1800]
A Review of Schools

From Shadows in the Water

In unexperienced infancy
Many a sweet mistake doth lie;
Mistake though false, intending true;
A seeming something more than view. . . .

Thus did I by the water's brink
Another world beneath me think;
And while the lofty spacious skies
Revers'd there abused mine eyes,
 I fancied other feet
 Came mine to touch or meet;
As by some puddle I did play
Another world within it lay.

'Twas strange that people there should walk
And yet I could not hear them talk;
That through a little watery chink
Which one dry ox or horse might drink,
 We other worlds should see,
 Yet not admitted be;
And other confines there behold
Of light and darkness, heat and cold.

Of all the playmates which I knew
That here I do the image view
In other selves: what can it mean
But that below the purling stream
 Some unknown joys there be
 Laid up in store for me,
To which I shall, when that thin skin
Is broken, be admitted in.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]

Fine knacks for ladies! cheap! choice! brave! and new.
Good pennyworths, but money cannot move;
I keep a fair, but for the Fair to view,
A beggar may be liberal of love.
Though all my wares be trash, the heart is true.

Great gifts are guiles, and look for gifts again,
My trifles come, as treasures from my mind,
It is a precious jewel to be plain,
Sometimes in shell, th' orientest pearls we find.
Of others, take a sheaf! of me, a grain.

Within this pack, pins! paints! laces! and gloves!
And divers toys fitting a country fair;
But in my heart, where duty serves and loves,
Turtles and twins! Court's brood! a heavenly pair!
Happy the heart that thinks of no removes.

JOHN DOWLAND's *Second Book of Songs or
Airs* [1600]

The Quiet Life

What pleasure have great princes
More dainty to their choice
Than herdsmen wild, who careless
In quiet life rejoice,
And fortune's fate not fearing
Sing sweet in summer morning?
Their dealings, plain and rightful,
Are void of all deceit;
They never know how spiteful
It is to kneel and wait
On favourite presumptuous
Whose pride is vain and sumptuous.
All day their flocks each tendeth;
At night they take their rest;
More quiet than who sendeth
His ship into the East,
Where gold and pearl are plenty,
But getting, very dainty.
For lawyers and their pleading,
They esteem it not a straw;
They think that honest meaning
Is of itself a law;
Where conscience judgeth plainly
They spend no money vainly.
Oh, happy who thus liveth,
Not caring much for gold;
With clothing which sufficeth
To keep him from the cold!
Though poor and plain his diet
Yet merry it is, and quiet.

ANON.

W. BYRD'S *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs* [1588]

SEPTEMBER

Now walk the angels on the walls of heaven
As sentinels to warn th' immortal souls.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE [1564-1593]
Tamburlaine

By means of a certain machine many people may stay some time under water. I do not describe my method of remaining under water, or how long I can stay without eating; and I do not publish or divulge these by reason of the evil nature of men, who would use them as means of destruction at the bottom of the sea, by piercing a hole in the bottom, and sinking them with the men in them.

* * * * *

If a man has a tent 12 braccia wide and 12 high covered with cloth, he can throw himself down from any great height without hurting himself.

* * * * *

A bird is an instrument working according to mathematical law, which instrument it is in the capacity of man to reproduce with all its movements but not with as much strength; though it is deficient only in the power of maintaining equilibrium. We may therefore say that such an instrument constructed by man is lacking in nothing except the life of the bird, and this life must needs be imitated by the life of man. The life which resides in the birds' members will without doubt better obey their needs than will that of man which is separated from them

and especially in the almost imperceptible movements which preserve equilibrium. But since we see that the bird is equipped for many sensitive varieties of movements we are able from this experience to deduce that the most obvious of these movements will be capable of being comprehended by man's understanding, and that he will to a great extent be able to provide against the destruction of that instrument of which he has made himself life and guide.

* * * * *

Destruction to such a machine may occur in two ways; of which the first is the breaking of the machine. The second would be when the machine should turn on its edge or nearly on its edge, because it ought always to descend in a highly oblique direction, and almost exactly balanced on its centre.

LEONARDO DA VINCI [1452-1519]

Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
Personal Talk

If right be racked and overrun,
And power take part with open wrong;
If fear by force do yield too soon,
The lack is like to last too long.

Among good things I prove and find,
The quiet life doth most abound,
And sure to the contented mind
There is no riches may be found.

For riches hates to be content;
Rule is enemy to quietness.
Power is most part impatient
And seldom likes to live in peace.

I would not have it thought hereby
The dolphin swim I mean to teach,
Nor yet to learn the falcon fly;
I row not so far past my reach.

But as my part above the rest
Is well to wish and well to will,
So till my breath shall fail my breast
I will not cease to wish you still.

ANON.

Tottel's Miscellany of Songs and Sonnets [1577]

In old days those who went to fight
In three years had one year's leave.
But in *this* war the soldiers are never changed;
They must go on fighting till they die on the battlefield.
I thought of you, so weak and indolent,
Hopelessly trying to learn to march and drill.
That a young man should ever come home again
Seemed about as likely as that the sky should fall.
Since I got the news that you were coming back,
Twice I mounted to the high wall of your home.
I found your brother mending your horse's stall;
I found your mother sewing your new clothes.
I am half afraid; perhaps it is not true;
Yet I never weary of watching for you on the road.
Each day I go out at the City Gate
With a flask of wine, lest you should come thirsty.
Oh that I could shrink the surface of the World,
So that suddenly I might find you standing at my side!

WANG CHIEN [c. A.D. 830]

*Hearing that his friend was coming back from
the war*

Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

London doth mourn, Lambeth is quite forlorn;
Trades cry, woe worth that ever they were born!
The want of term is town and city's harm;
Close chambers we do want to keep us warm.
Long banish'd must we live from our friends:
This low-built house will bring us to our ends.

From winter, plague and pestilence, good Lord, deliver us!

THOMAS NASHE [1567-1601]

Summer's Last Will and Testament [1600]

Magne pater divum, saevos punire tyrannos
haut alia ratione velis, cum dira libido
moverit ingenium ferventi tincta veneno;
virtutem videant intabescantque relictâ.

PERSIUS [A.D. 34-62]
Satire III

Translation:

Great Father of the gods, should'st thou desire to punish fierce tyrants whose minds have been poisoned by the burning lust of power, what better way than this? Let them recognize virtue, and rot with remorse at having lost it!

Epitaph on a Soldier

His body lies interred within this mould,
Who died a young man yet departed old;
And in all strength of youth that man can have
Was ready still to drop into his grave:
For aged in virtue, with a youthful eye
He welcomed it, being still prepared to die,
And living so, though young deprived of breath,
He did not suffer an untimely death;
But we may say of his brave blest decease—
He died in war, and yet he died in peace.

CYRIL TOURNEUR [1575(?)–1625]
The Atheist's Tragedy [1611]

Hence, David, walk the solitary woods,
And in some cedar's shade the thunder slew,
And fire from heaven hath made his branches black,
Sit mourning the decease of Absalon:
Against the body of that blasted plant
In thousand shivers break thy ivory lute,
Hanging thy stringless harp upon his boughs;
And through the hollow sapless sounding trunk
Bellow the torments that perplex thy soul.
There let the winds sit sighing till they burst;
Let tempest, muffled with a cloud of pitch,
Threaten the forests with her hellish face,
Then let them toss my broken lute to heaven,
Even to his hands that beats me with the strings,
To show how sadly his poor shepherd sings.

GEORGE PEELE [1558(?)–1597]

The Love of King David and Queen Bethsabe

By this you may see who are the rude and barbarous Indians: For verily there is no savage nation under the cope of Heaven, that is more absurdly barbarous than the Christian World. They that go naked and drink water and live upon roots are like Adam, or Angels in comparison of us. But they indeed that call beads and glass buttons jewels, and dress themselves with feather, and buy pieces of brass and broken hafts of knives of our merchants are somewhat like us. But we pass them in barbarous opinions, and monstrous apprehensions, which we nickname civility and the mode, amongst us. I am sure those barbarous people that go naked, come nearer to Adam, God, and Angels in the simplicity of their wealth, though not in knowledge.

THOMAS TRATHERNE [1637(?)-1674]
Centuries of Meditations

Fitti nel limo dicon; "Tristi fummo
nell' aer dolce che 'dal sol s'allegra,
portando dentro accidioso fummo."

DANTE [1265-1321]
Inferno, VII, 121-123

Translation:

Stuck in the slime they say, "For we were sad in the sweet air
which the sun gladdens, bearing sluggish smoke within our
hearts.

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the sager sorts our deeds reprove,
Let us not weigh them: Heaven's great lamps do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive,
 But soon as once is set our little light
 Then must we sleep our ever-during night.

If all would lead their lives in love like me,
Then bloody swords and armour should not be. . . .

THOMAS CAMPION [*d.* 1620]

Ut missum sponsi furtivo munere malum
procurrit casto virginis e gremio,
quod miserae oblitae molli sub veste locatum,
dum adventu matris prosilit, excutitur:
atque illud prono praeceps agitur decursu,
huic manat tristi conscius ore rubor.

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]

LXV

Translation:

As an apple sent as a secret gift from a lover to his girl falls from her chaste bosom—poor girl, she had had it underneath her soft shift—and then her mother came in and she forgot it and ran to meet her—and the apple was shaken from its hiding-place: on it bounced rolling and bumping on the ground—and a conscious blush spreads over her sad face. . . .

I weigh not Fortune's frown nor smile,
I joy not much in earthly joys,
I seek not state, I reak [*sic*] not style,
I am not fond of Fancy's toys.
I rest so pleased with what I have
I wish no more, no more I crave.

I tremble not at noise of war,
I quake not at the thunder's crack,
I shrink not at a blazing star,
I sound not at the news of wreck,
I fear no loss, I hope no gain,
I envy none, I none disdain.

I see Ambition never pleased,
I see some Tantals starve in store,
I see gold's dropsy seldom eased,
I see each Midas gape for more:
I neither want nor yet abound,
Enough's a feast, content is crowned.

I feign not friendship where I hate,
I fawn not on the great for grace,
I prize, I praise a mean estate
Ne yet too lofty, nor too base,
This is all my choice, my cheer—
A mind content and conscience clear.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER

From ORLANDO GIBBONS' First Set of Madrigals
[1612]

So long he rode he drew anigh
A mill upon the river's brim,
That seemed a goodly place to him,
For o'er the oily smooth millhead
There hung the apples growing red,
And many an ancient apple-tree
Within the orchard could he see,
While the smooth millwalls white and black
Shook to the great wheel's measured clack,
And grumble of the gear within;
While o'er the roof that dulled that din
The doves sat crooning half the day,
And round the half-cut stack of hay
The sparrows fluttered twittering.

WILLIAM MORRIS [1834-1896]

The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold; the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me; their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things. The men! oh, what venerable and reverend creatures did the agèd seem! Immortal cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling angels! and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street were moving jewels: I knew not that they were born or should die. But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the light of the day, and something infinite behind everything appeared, which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. . . .

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]
Centuries of Meditations

The Blue Mountain Torrent

It is said that those who make for the Yellow Flower River
Must pursue this blue mountain stream;
And follow a myriad twists and turns among the hill ravines
Although as the crow flies the distance is less than a hundred
miles.

The stream bickers among the pebbles and (under) the deep
tranquil green of the pines,
Here broadening out to allow the water chestnut and water
gentian to float on its surface,
And there glistening deep and bright among reeds and rushes.
I am by temperament indolent and slothful
And how much more by this restful clear stream;
Leave me to ponder on the hermit's rock
For there dangling a fishing rod I am entirely content.

WANG WEI [A.D. 699-759]
Translated by SOAME JENYNS

To a Fish

You strange, astonished-looking, angle-faced,
Dreary-mouthed, gaping wretches of the sea,
Gulping salt water everlastingly,
Cold-blooded, though with red your blood be graced,
And mute, though dwellers in the roaring waste;
And you, all shapes beside, that fishy be—
Some round, some flat, some long, all devilry,
Legless, unloving, infamously chaste:—

O scaly, slippery, wet, swift, staring wights,
What is't ye do? What life lead? Eh, dull goggles?
How do ye vary your vile days and nights?
How pass your Sundays? Are ye still but joggles
In ceaseless wash? Still nought but gapes, and bites,
And drinks, and stares, diversified with boggles?

A Fish Replies

Amazing monster! that, for aught I know,
With the first sight of thee didst make our race
For ever stare! O flat and shocking face,
Grimly divided from the breast below!
Thou that on dry land horribly dost go
With a split body and most ridiculous pace,
Prong after prong, disgracer of all grace,
Long-useless-finned, haired, upright, unwet, slow!

O breather of unbreathable, sword-sharp air,
How canst exist? How bear thyself, thou dry
And dreary sloth? What particle canst share
Of the only blessed life, the watery?
I sometimes see of ye an actual *pair*
Go by, linked fin by fin, most odiously.

*The Fish turns into a Man, and then into a Spirit,
and again speaks*

Man's life is warm, glad, sad, 'twixt loves and graves,
Boundless in hope, honoured with pangs austere,
Heaven-gazing; and his angel-wings he craves:
The fish is swift, small-needing, vague yet clear,
A cold, sweet, silver life, wrapped in round waves,
Quickened with touches of transporting fear.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT [1784-1859]

Here, in this little Bay,
Full of tumultuous life and great repose,
Where, twice a day,
The purposeless, glad ocean comes and goes,
Under high cliffs, and far from the huge town,
I sit me down.
For want of me the world's course will not fail:
When all its work is done, the lie shall rot;
The truth is great, and shall prevail,
When none cares whether it prevail or not.

COVENTRY PATMORE [1823-1896]
Magna est Veritas

On Edward's brow no laurels cast a shade,
Nor at his feet are warlike spoils display'd:
Yet here, since first his bounty rais'd the pile,
The lame grow active, and the languid smile:
See this, ye chiefs, and, struck with envy, pine,
To kill is brutal, but to save, divine.

*An inscription design'd for the Statue of Edward
the VIth at St. Thomas's Hospital*

Forbear, thou great good husband, little ant;
A little respite from thy flood of sweat!
Thou, thine own horse and cart under this plant,
Thy spacious tent, fan thy prodigious heat;
Down with thy double load of that one grain!
It is a granary for all thy train.

Austere and cynick! not one hour t' allow,
To lose with pleasure, what thou got'st with pain;
But drive on sacred festivals thy plow,
Tearing high-ways with thy ore-charg'd wain,
Not all thy life-time one poor minute live,
And thy ore-labour'd bulk with mirth relieve?

Thus we unthrifty thrive within earth's tomb
For some more rav'nous and ambitious jaw:
The grain in th' ant's, the ant in the pie's womb,
The pie in th' hawk's, the hawk ith' eagle's maw.
So scattering to hoard 'gainst a long day,
Thinking to save all, we cast all away.

RICHARD LOVELACE [1618-1658]
From The Ant

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!
 As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
 Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
 Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
 The fringes of a southward-facing brow
 Among the Aegean isles;
 And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
 Freight with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
 Green bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in brine;
 And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

 The young lighthearted Masters of the waves;
 And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail,
 And day and night held on indignantly
 O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
 Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
 To where the Atlantic raves
 Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
 There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
 Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
 And on the beach undid his corded bales.

MATTHEW ARNOLD [1828-1888]
The Scholar Gipsy

Aurea pavonum ridenti imbuta lepore
 Saecula. . .

Lucretius [98-55 B.C.]
 II, 501

Translation:

The golden generations of peacocks, steeped in smiling charm.

OCTOBER

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a Youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
Ruth

Flush with the pond the lurid furnace burn'd
At eve, while smoke and vapour fill'd the yard;
The gloomy winter sky was dimly starr'd,
The fly-wheel with a mellow murmur turn'd;
While, ever rising on its mystic stair
In the dim light, from secret chambers borne,
The straw of harvest, sever'd from the corn,
Climb'd and fell over, in the murky air.
I thought of mind and matter, will and law,
And then of him, who set his stately seal
Of Roman words on all the forms he saw
Of old-world husbandry; I could but feel
With what a rich precision *he* would draw
The endless ladder, and the booming wheel!

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER [1808-1879]

(Brother of Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

*The Steam Threshing-Machine with the Straw
Carrier*

The Nile

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,
And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT [1784-1859]
Foliage [1818]

A Crocodile

Hard by the liliated Nile I saw
A duskish river-dragon stretched along,
The brown habergeon of his limbs enamelled
With sanguine almerdines and rainy pearl:
And on his back there lay a young one sleeping,
No bigger than a mouse; with eyes like beads,
And a small fragment of its speckled egg
Remaining on its harmless, pulpy snout;
A thing to laugh at, as it gaped to catch
The baulking, merry flies. In the iron jaws
Of the great devil-beast, like a pale soul
Fluttering in rocky hell, lightsofely flew
A snowy troculus, with roseate beak
Tearing the hairy leeches from his throat.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES [1798-1851]

Linquantur Phrygii, Catulle, campi
Niceaeque ager uber aestuosae:
ad claras Asiae volemus urbes.

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]
XLVI

Translation:

Catullus! Let us leave the Phrygian plains and the rich land of
burning Nicaea; let us fly to the famed cities of Asia.

Nec tibi, gemmarum quidquid felicibus Indis
nascitur, Eoi qua maris unda rubet.

Tibullus [54-19 B.C.]
II, iii

Translation:

Not for you are all the pearls which are born to the happy
Indies, where the wave of the Eastern ocean turns to red.

What needeth all this travail and turmoiling,
Shortening the life's sweet pleasure
To seek this far-fetched treasure
In those hot climates under Phoebus broiling?
O fools, can you not see a traffic nearer
In my sweet lady's face, where Nature showeth
Whatever treasure eye sees or heart knoweth?—
Rubies and diamonds dainty,
And orient pearls such plenty,
Coral and ambergris sweeter and dearer
Than which the South Seas or Moluccas lend us,
Or either Indies, East or West, do send us.

ANON.

J. WILBYE's *English Madrigals* [1598]

I have found that things unknown have a secret influence on the soul, and like the centre of the earth unseen violently attract it. We love we know not what, and therefore everything allures us. As iron at a distance is drawn by the loadstone, there being some invisible communications between them, so is there in us a world of Love to somewhat, though we know not what in the world that should be. There are invisible ways of conveyance by which some great thing doth touch our souls, and by which we tend to it.

THOMAS TRAHERNE [1637(?)–1674]
Centuries of Meditations

Fight all opinions contrary to truth, but let your weapons be patience, sweetness, and charity, for violence, besides injuring your own soul, injures the best cause.

ST. JAN KANTY [1390–1473]
(St. John Cantius)

Upon a Ring of Bells (Comparison)

These Bells are like the Powers of my Soul;
Their Clappers to the Passions of my mind;
The Ropes by which my Bells are made to toll,
Are Promises (I by experience find).

My body is the Staple where they hang,
My graces they which do ring ev'ry Bell:
Nor is there any thing gives such a tang,
When by these Ropes these Ringers ring them well.

Let not my Bells these Ringers want, nor Ropes;
Yea let them have room for to swing and sway:
To toss themselves deny them not their Scopes.
Lord! in my Steeple give them room to play.
If they do toll, ring out, or chime all in,
They drown the tempting tinckling Voice of Vice:
Lord! when my Bells have gone, my Soul has bin
As 'twere a tumbling in this Paradise!

JOHN BUNYAN [1628-1688]

οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,
ἢ ἡ δὲ ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχῃτον
Ἀνὴρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσιν,
Χάρματα δ' εὐμενέτησι· μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοί.

HOMER [(?) 900 B.C.]
Odyssey, VI, 183

Translation:

For there is nothing more potent or better than this: when a man and a woman, sharing the same ideas about life, keep house together. It is a thing which causes pain to their enemies and pleasure to their friends, But only they themselves know what it really means.

The sound of her silk skirt has stopped.
On the marble pavement dust grows.
Her empty room is cold and still.
Fallen leaves are piled against the doors.
 Longing for that lovely lady
How can I bring my aching heart to rest?

WU-TI [157-87 B.C.]

Li Fu-Jen

Translated by ARTHUR WALEY

I serve a mistress whiter than the snow,
Straighter than cedar, brighter than the glass,
Finer in trip and swifter than the roe,
More pleasant than the field of flowering grass;
More gladsome to my withering joys that fade
Than winter's sun or summer's cooling shade.

Sweeter than swelling grape of ripest wine,
Softer than feathers of the fairest swan,
Smoother than jet, more stately than the pine,
Fresher than poplar, smaller than my span,
Clearer than beauty's fiery-pointed beam,
Or icy crust of crystal's frozen stream.

Yet is she curster than the bear by kind,
And harder-hearted than the aged oak,
More glib than oil, more fickle than the wind,
Stiffer than steel, no sooner bent but broke.
Lo, thus my service is a lasting sore;
Yet will I serve, although I die therefore.

ANTHONY MUNDAY [1553(?)–1633]
Two Italian Gentlemen [1584]

Why should you swear I am forsworn,
Since thine I vowed to be?
Lady, it is already morn,
And 'twas last night I swore to thee
That fond impossibility.

Have I not loved thee much, and long;
A tedious twelve hours space?
I must all other beauties wrong,
And rob thee of a new embrace,
Could I still doat upon thy face.

Not but all joy in thy brown hair
By others may be found;
But I must search the black and fair,
Like skilful mineralists that sound
For treasure in un-ploughed-up ground.

Then, if when I have loved my round,
Thou prov'st the pleasant she,
With spoils of meaner beauties crowned
I laden will return to thee,
Even sated with variety.

RICHARD LOVELACE [1618-1658]

I know not whether
I see your meaning: if I do, it lies
Upon the wordy wavelets of your voice,
Dim as an evening shadow in a brook,
When the least moon has silver on 't no larger
Than the pure white of Hebe's pinkish nail.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES [1798-1831]
From The Last Man

A Farewell

Oft have I mused, but now at length I find
Why those that die, men say they do depart:
Depart, a word so gentle to my mind,
Weakly did seem to paint death's ugly dart.

But now the stars with their strange course do bind
Me one to leave, with whom I leave my heart.
I hear a cry of spirits faint and blind,
That parting thus my chiefest part I part.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY [1554-1586]
Certain Sonnets

On Sir Philip Sidney

Y ou knew,—who knew not Astrophil?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)
Things known permit me to renew;
Of him you know his merit such,
I cannot say, you hear, too much.

When he descended down the mount,
His personage seemed most divine:
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerful eyne;
To hear him speak and sweetly smile,
You were in Paradise the while.

A sweet attractive kind of grace,
A full assurance given by looks,
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospel books;
I trow that countenance cannot lie
Whose thoughts are legible in the eye.

Was never eye did see that face,
Was never ear did hear that tongue,
Was never mind did mind his grace,
That ever thought the travel long;
But eyes, and ears, and every thought,
Were with his sweet perfections caught.

MATTHEW ROYDEN [1580(?)–1622]
(*An excerpt from An Elegy, or friend's passion for
his Astrophil*)
From the Phoenix' Nest [1593]

To wish and want doth make a pensive heart:
To look and lack doth make a weary eye:
To touch and not to take's a foolish part:
To love and not to move's a misery;
Then since all hope is vain, all hope adieu!
For thoughts, words, deeds, and all are all untrue.

Vain is it for to write upon the shore:
Vain is it on the water for to till:
Vain is it stars or sand to number o'er:
Vain is it to command or wind or will:
And without hope to hope is also vain,
Since good hope never can good hap attain.

ANON. [before 1600]
B.M., M.S. Harl., 6383

. . . As ful ofte
Next the foule netle, rough and thikke,
The rose waxeth swote and smothe and softe.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
Troilus and Criseyde

Artifex Gloriosus

Anche a me l'oro, come a Benvenuto,
è servo. Chiedi! Sien divini o umani
i tuoi sogni, di sotto a le mie mani
invincibili il vaso esce compiuto.

Vuoi che da l'ansa il Fauno bicornuto
guidi un coro di Ninfe e di Sylvani
in tondo? O vuoi forse la guerra dei Titani
pur fragorosa nel metallo muto?

O vuoi forse che in doppio ordine eguale
incedano, composte i pepli, accanto
a gli efebi le vergini d'Atene?

Chiedi! E nessun licor del trionfale
oro degno sarà, fuor che il tuo pianto
puro o il più puro sangue di tue vene.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO [1863-1938]
Eleganze

Translation:

To me also, even as to Cellini gold is as a slave. Ask me! And whether your dreams be human or divine, the vase will issue perfect from my unconquerable hands. Shall some two-horned Faun lead from the handle round the vase a chorus of Nymphs and Sylvans? Or shall my mute metal thunder to the battle of the Titans? Or you might wish perhaps to see a double row of Athenian virgins, their tunics orderly arranged, step side by side with the young men? Ask me! And no liquor shall be worthy of the triumphant gold, no liquor other than your own pure tears, or the purest blood of your veins.

With banners furled, and clarions mute,
An army passes in the night;
And beaming spears and helms salute
The dark with bright.

In silence deep the legions stream,
With open ranks, in order true;
Over boundless plains they stream and gleam—
No chief in view!

Afar, in twinkling distance lost,
(So legends tell) he lonely wends
And back through all that shining host
His mandate sends.

HERMAN MELVILLE [1819-1891]

To His Sweetest Children

I have given you, forsooth, kisses in plenty and but few stripes.
If ever I have flogged you 'twas but with a peacock's tail.

THOMAS MORE [1478-1535]

NOVEMBER

Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And shares the nature of infinity.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]
The Borderers

Lie urn by urn, and touch but in their names.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE [1605-1682]
Urn-burial

Know that Love is a careless child,
And forgets promise past:
He is blind, he is deaf when he list,
And in faith never fast.

His desire is a dureless content,
And a trustless joy;
He is won with a world of despair,
And is lost with a toy.

Of womenkind such indeed is the love,
Or the word love abusèd,
Under which many childish desires
And conceits are excusèd.

But true love is a durable fire,
In the mind ever burning,
Never sick, never dead, never cold,
From itself never turning.

ANON. [16th Century]

An Epitaph

I was, I am not; smiled, that since did weep;
Laboured, that rest; I waked, that now must sleep;
I played, I play not; sung, that now am still;
Saw, that am blind; I would, that have no will;
I fed that which feeds worms; I stood, I fell;
I bade God save you, that now bid farewell;
I felt, I feel not; followed, was pursued;
I warred, have peace; I conquered, am subdued;
I moved, want motion; I was stiff, that bow
Below the earth; then something, nothing now;
I caught, am caught; I travelled, here I lie;
Lived in the world, that to the world now die.

THOMAS HEYWOOD [1575(?)—1641(?)]

Death is before me to-day,
Like the recovery of a sick man,
Like going forth into a garden after sickness;
Death is before me to-day,
Like the odour of myrrh,
—Like sitting under the sail on a windy day;
Death is before me to-day,
Like the odour of lotus flowers,
Like sitting on the shore of drunkenness;
Death is before me to-day,
Like the course of the freshet,
Like the return of a man from the war-galley to his house,
When he has spent years in captivity.

Egyptian Poem

Grass of levity,
Span in brevity,
Flowers' felicity,
Fire of misery,
Winds' stability,
Is mortality.

ANON. [1609]

Omnia perfunctus vitae praemia, marces.

Lucretius [98–55 B.C.]
III, 970

Translation:

You have enjoyed all the prizes of life; and now you wither.

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares;
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain;
My crop of corn is but a field of tares;
And all my good is but vain hope of gain:
The day is past, and yet I saw no sun;
And now I live, and now my life is done.

My tale was heard, and yet it was not told;
My fruit is fall'n, and yet my leaves are green;
My youth is spent, and yet I am not old;
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen;
My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun;
And now I live, and now my life is done.

I sought my death, and found it in my womb;
I looked for life, and saw it was a shade;
I trod the earth, and knew it was my tomb;
And now I die, and now I was but made:
My glass is full, and now my glass is run;
And now I live, and now my life is done.

CHIDIOCK TICHBORNE [1558(?)-1586]

Verses of Praise and Joy [1586]

Elegy, written in the Tower before his execution
[1586]

And ye lovely ladies, with your long fingers,
Take silk and sendal, and sew while there be time
Chasubles for chaplains the churches to honour.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]

PIERS FLOWMAN

The Vision of Piers Counsel

Il faut travailler, sinon par goût, au moins par désespoir,
puisque, tout bien vérifié, travailler est moins ennuyeux que
s'amuser.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE [1821–1867]

Mon cœur mis à nu

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientium templa serena; . . .
O miseras hominum gentes! O pectora caeca!

Lucretius [98–55 B.C.]
II, 7–9, 14

Translation:

But nothing is more pleasant than to dwell securely in the serene temples which the teaching of wise men have erected and maintained. . . . Oh wretched races of mankind, blind souls!

νοῦν ἔχοντι ὀλίγοι ἔμφορες πολλῶν ἀφρόνων φοβερώτεροι.

PLATO [429–347 B.C.]
Symposium, 194

Translation:

To a man of sense a few intelligent people constitute a more alarming audience than a crowd of fools.

We cannot deceive God and nature; for a coffin is a coffin, though it be covered with a pompous veil; and the minutes of our time strike on and are counted by Angels, till the period comes which must cause the passing bell to give warning to all the neighbours that thou art dead, and they must be so; and nothing can excuse or retard this. And if our death could be put off a little longer, what advantage can it be in thy accounts of nature or felicity? They that 3,000 years ago died unwillingly, and stopped death two days, or stayed a week, what is their gain? *Where is that week?*

JEREMY TAYLOR [1613-1667]
Holy Being

Alexander the Great

FOUR men stood by the grave of a man,
The grave of Alexander the Proud:
They sang words without falsehood
Over the prince from fair Greece.

Said the first man of them:
"Yesterday there were around the king
The men of the world—a sad gathering!
Though to-day he is alone."

"Yesterday the king of the brown world
Rode upon the heavy earth:
Though to-day it is the earth
That rides upon his neck."

"Yesterday," said the third wise author,
"Philip's son owned the whole world:
To-day he has nought
Save seven feet of earth."

"Alexander the liberal and great
Was wont to bestow silver and gold:
To-day," said the fourth man,
"The gold is here, and it is nought."

Thus truly spoke the wise men
Around the grave of the high-king:
It was not foolish women's talk
What those four sang.

Translated from the Irish by KUNO MEYER

He plied Hephaestion's ear with royal schemes
Over the wine-cup; hollow rang his voice
From barrier-rocks of Providence, and gleams
Of fatal fever lighten'd from his eyes;
He thought to build and drain with busy power—
But could not pass beyond the appointed goal;
For the strong ward of one prophetic scroll
Had fray'd the horns of Ammon, and his hour
Drew nigh; Time sped—the bitterns throng'd the strand,
And shook the site of his imperial dream
With booming, and the dropsy of the land
Grew from the untended waters; evening's beam,
And morn's look'd down upon a realm of fear,
With pools and mounds and marshes far and near.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER [1808–1879]
(Brother of Alfred, Lord Tennyson)
*Alexander the Great's Designs at Babylon
frustrated*

To their long home the greatest princes go
In hearses dressed with fair escutcheons round,
The blazons of an ancient race, renowned
For deeds of valour; and in costly show
The train moves forward in procession slow
Towards some hallowed fane; no common ground,
But the arched vault and tomb with sculpture crowned
Receive the corpse, with honours laid below.
Alas! whate'er their wealth, their wit, their worth,
Such is the end of all the sons of earth.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT [1583-1627]
Upon a Funeral
Bosworth Field

Common sense wills that every wight should work
In ditching or in digging, in teaching or in prayer,
Life active or life contemplative.
The man that feedeth himself in faithful labour
He is blessed by the Book in body and in soul.

(?) WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]

PIERS PLOWMAN

The Vision of Piers Counsel

ἔργον δ' οὐδὲν ὄνειδος, ἀεργίη δέ τ' ὄνειδος.

HESIOD [(?)750 B.C.]

Works and Days, 310

Translation:

There is nothing disgraceful about work: it is laziness which
is disgraceful.

If I could shut the gate against my thoughts
And keep out sorrow from this room within,
Or memory could cancel all the notes
Of my misdeeds, and I unthink my sin:
How free, how clear, how clean my soul should lie,
Discharged of such a loathsome company!

ANON.

J. DANYEL'S *Songs for the Lute* [1606] .

So have I seen an unfixt star
Outshine the rest of all the numerous train,
As bright as that which guides the mariner,
Dart swiftly from its darkened sphere
And ne'er shall sight the world again.

APHRA BEHN [1640-1689]

. . . **A**nd there was spring-faced cherubs that did sleep
Like water-lilies on that motionless deep,
How beautiful! with bright unruffled hair
On sleek unfretted brows, and eyes that were
Buried in marble tombs, a pale eclipse!
And smile-bedimpled cheeks, and pleasant lips,
Meekly apart, as if the soul intense
Spake out in dreams of its own innocence. . . .
So lay they garmented in torpid light,
Under the pall of a transparent night,
Like solemn apparitions lulled sublime
To everlasting rest,—and with them Time
Slept, as he sleeps upon the silent face
Of a dark dial in a sunless place.

THOMAS HOOD [1759–1845]

For al that thing which I desyre I mis,
And al that ever I wolde nat, I-wis,
That finde I redy to me evermore.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
A Compleint to his Lady

There mournfull Cypresse grew in greatest store,
And trees of bitter Gall, and Heben sad;
Dead sleeping Poppy, and black Hellebore;
Cold Coloquintida, and Tetra mad;
Mortall Samnitis, and Cicuta bad,
With which th' unjust Athenians made to dy
Wise Socrates; who, thereof quaffing glad,
Poured out his life and last Philosophy,
To the fayre Critias, his dearest Belamy!

EDMUND SPENSER [1552(?)–1559]
Faerie Queene, LII

καὶ ὁ πάντων θαυμαστότατον, Σωκράτη μεθύοντα οὐδείς
πώποτε ἑώρακεν ἀνθρώπων.

PLATO [429–347 B.C.]
Symposium, 220

Translation:

And what is the most marvellous thing of all is that nobody
ever has seen Socrates drunk.

Οὐ μὲν οὖν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, φάναι, ὥ φιλούμενε Ἀγάθων, δύνασαι ἀντιλέγειν, ἐπεὶ Σωκράτει γε οὐδὲν χαλεπὸν.

PLATO [429–347 B.C.]
Symposium, 201

Translation:

But my dearest Agathon it is truth which you can't contradict; you can without any difficulty contradict Socrates.

DECEMBER

This world nis but a thurghfare of wo,
And we ben pilgrimes, passinge to and fro.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340(?)–1400]
The Knightes Tale

Long was the way and late when they met a palmer,
In pilgrim dress appavelled; he had a staff in hand,
Bound with broad list like bindweed twisted round it,
A bowl and bag, he bare at his side,
And on his hat a hundred flasks of lead,
Many a cross from Sinai, scallop-shells of Spain,
Cross-keys from Rome, and the portraiture of Christ,
Signs of his pilgrimage, that men might know his saints.

(?)WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)–1400(?)]
PIERS PLOWMAN
The Vision of the Search for Truth

Give me my scallop-shell of Quiet;
My staff of Faith to walk upon;
My scrip of Joy, immortal diet;
My bottle of Salvation;
My gown of Glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.
Blood must be my body's balmer,—
No other balm will there be given—
Whilst my soul, like a white palmer,
Travels to the land of Heaven;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains—
And there I'll kiss
The bowl of Bliss,
And drink my eternal fill
On every milken hill:
My soul will be a-dry before,
But after it will ne'er thirst more.

(?)SIR WALTER RALEIGH [1552(?)–1618]
Diaphantus [1604]

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled
 breast;
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the Blessèd only
 see
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

THOMAS CAMPION [*d.* 1620]

Come, O heart, fare heavenward, fare to the divine pasture,
Since thou hast grazed awhile in the pasture of cattle.
Set thy whole desire on that whereof thou hast no hope,
For thou hast come thus far from original hopelessness.
Be silent that the lord who gave thee language may speak,
For as he fashioned a door and lock, he has also made a key.

JALĀLU'DDIN RUMI [1207-1273]
The Divani Shamsi Tabriz
Translated by REYNOLD NICHOLSON

There is a silence where hath been no sound,
There is a silence where no sound may be,
In the cold grave—under the deep—deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound:
No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground:
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox, or wild hyæna, calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

THOMAS HOOD [1799–1845]

No more shall fields or floods do so,
For I to shades more dark and silent go:
All this world's noise appears to me
A dull ill-acted comedy. . . .

Then down I laid my head
Down on cold earth, and for awhile was dead,
And my freed soul to a strange somewhere fled.

ABRAHAM COWLEY [1618-1667]
The Mistress, "The Despair"

When Cortez' furious legions flew
O'er ravag'd fields of rich Peru,
Struck with his bleeding people's woes,
Old India's awful genius rose:
He sat on Andes' topmost stone,
And heard a thousand nations groan;
For grief his feathery crown he tore,
To see huge *Plata* foam with gore;
He broke his arrows, stamp'd the ground,
To view his cities smoaking round.

What woes, he cry'd, hath lust of gold
O'er my poor country widely roll'd!
Plund'ers proceed! my bowels tear,
But ye shall meet destruction there;
From the deep-vaulted mine shall rise
Th' insatiate fiend, pale Avarice;
Whose steps shall trembling Justice fly,
Peace, Order, Law, and Amity!
I see all Europe's children curst
With lucre's universal thirst:
The rage that sweeps my sons away
My baneful gold shall well repay.

MR. WARTON

The Revenge of America

Adieu! farewell earth's bliss!
This world uncertain is:
Fond are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys.
None from his darts can fly:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth!
Gold cannot buy you health;
Physic himself must fade;
All things to end are made;
The plague full swift goes by:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour;
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops unto the grave:
Worms feed on Hector brave;
Swords may not fight with fate;
Earth still holds ope her gate;
Come! come! the bells do cry.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Haste, therefore, each degree
To welcome destiny:
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage:
Mount we unto the sky.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

THOMAS NASHE [1567-1601]
Summer's Last Will and Testament [1600]

Happy, O! happy he, who not affecting
The endless toils attending worldly cares,
With mind reposed, all discontents rejecting,
In silent peace his way to heaven prepares,
Deeming this life a scene, the world a stage
Whereon man acts his weary pilgrimage.

From JOHN WILBY's Second Set of Madrigals [1609]

On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands;
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach:—"In greatness is no trust.
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed. . . ."

FRANCIS BEAUMONT [1584-1616]

The glories of our blood and state,
Are shadows, not substantial things,
There is no armour against fate,
Death lays his icy hand on Kings,
Sceptre and Crown,
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made,
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

JAMES SHIRLEY [1596–1666]
Ajax and Ulysses [1659]

Nullum numen habes, si sit prudentia; nos te,
nos facimus, Fortuna, deam caeloque locamus.

JUVENAL [A.D. 60–140]
Satire XI

Translation:

Goddess of Fortune! You would have no divinity if only men
were wise; it is we who make a goddess of you and place you
in heaven.

Corpse, clad with carefulness;
Heart, heaped with heaviness;
Purse, poor and penniless;
Back, bare in bitterness;
Lips, laid with loathsomeness;
Oh, get my grave in readiness;
Fain would I die to end this stress
Remèdiless.

THOMAS HOWELL [fl. 1568]
The Arbor of Amitie [1568]

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

WILLIAM COWPER [1731-1800]
A Winter Walk at Noon

Truth telleth thee that Love is the treacle of sin,
A sovran salve for body and soul.
Love is the plant of Peace, most precious of the virtues.
Heaven could not hold it, so heavy was Love,
Till it had of this earth eaten its fill;
Then never lighter was a leaf upon a linden tree,
Than Love was when it took the flesh and blood of man.
Fluttering, piercing as a needle's point,
No armour may it stay, nor no high walls.

(?)WILLIAM LANGLAND [1330(?)-1400(?)]
PIERS PLOWMAN
The Vision of Holy Church

Yet, if his majesty our sovereign lord
Should of his own accord
Friendly himself invite,
And say "I'll be your guest to morrow night,"
How should we stir ourselves, call and command
All hands to work! "Let no man idle stand.
Set me fine Spanish tables in the hall,
See they be fitted all;
Let there be room to eat,
And order taken that there want no meat.
See every scone and candlestick made bright,
That without tapers they may give a light.
Look to the presence: are the carpets spread,
The dais o'er the head,
The cushions in the chairs,
And all the candles lighted on the stairs?
Perfume the chambers, and in any case
Let each man give attendance in his place."
Thus if the king were coming would we do,
And 'twere good reason too;
For 'tis a duteous thing
To show all honour to an earthly king,
And after all our travail and our cost,
So he be pleased, to think no labour lost.
But at the coming of the King of Heaven
All's set at six and seven:
We wallow in our sin,
Christ cannot find a chamber in the inn.
We entertain him always like a stranger,
And as at first still lodge him in the manger.

From Christ Church MS. K.3, 43-5

Music by THOMAS FORD

These verses seem to have been taken from some longer poem.
A. H. Bullen suggests that they may be by Henry Vaughan the Silurist.

What if a day, or a month, or a year
Crown thy delights with a thousand sweet contentings?
Cannot a chance of a night or an hour
Cross they desires with as many sad tormentings?
 Fortune, honour, beauty, youth
 Are but blossoms dying;
 Wanton pleasure, doting love,
 Are but shadows flying.
 All our joys are but toys,
 Idle thoughts deceiving;
 None hath power of an hour
 In their lives bereaving.

Earth's but a point to the world, and a man
Is but a point to the world's comparèd centre:
Shall then the point of a point be so vain
As to triumph in a silly point's adventure?
 All is hazard that we have,
 There is nothing biding;
 Days of pleasure are like streams
 Through fair meadows gliding.
 Weal and woe, time doth go,
 Time is never turning:
 Secret fates guide our states,
 Both in mirth and mourning.

THOMAS CAMPION [*d.* 1620]

*From RICHARD ALISON'S An hour's recreation in
music*

di magni, horribilem et sacrum libellum
quem tu scilicet ad tuum Catullum
misti, continuo ut die periret
Saturnalibus, optimo dierum!

Catullus [84-54 B.C.]

XIV

Translation:

God! what a horrible and cursèd book to send to your Catullus
so that he should die on the very morrow of the Saturnalia—
that best of feasts.

Me thinks, I see, with what a busy haste,
Zacheus climb'd the Tree: But O, how fast,
How full of speed, canst thou imagine (when
Our Saviour call'd) he powder'd down agen!
He ne'er made trial, if the boughs were sound,
Or rotten; nor how far 'twas to the ground:
There was no danger fear'd; at such a Call,
He'll venture nothing, that dare fear a fall;
Needs must be down, by such a Spirit driven,
Nor could he fall unless he fall to Heaven.
Down came Zacheus, ravisht from the tree;
Bird that was shot ne'er dropt so quick as he.

FRANCIS QUARLES [1592-1644]
on Zacheus
Divine Fancies [1632]

The Wind blows out; the Bubble dies;
The Spring entomb'd in Autumn lies;
The Dew dries up; the Star is shot;
The Flight is past; and Man forgot.

HENRY KING [1592-1669]
Poems [1657]

Ah, que la vie est quotidienne!

JULES LAFORGUE [1860-1887]
Les Complaintes

/

TRANSLATIONS

•

Now Silence, clad in grey,
Makes her obedient way
Over the circling sphere of land and sea,
And Earth and Heaven meet
Below her sandalled feet
T'accept the gift of her tranquility.
The sea a liquid mirror lies.
And holds in happiness the beauty of the skies.

Now to the earth is bent
The heavenly Firmament
To find herself portray'd in the seas;
The fiery stars from high
Go swimming fearless by,
And with the silvery fishes take their ease;
And not one minnow quails
Before those fires that seem to love their glimmering tails.

Now Nature watches pass
In this majestic glass
Water and flame at one, like man and wife,
And in her heart delights
In such accordant sights,
These fair stars fallen to so new a life,
Like salamanders of the sea
That bathe their lights with joy in its profundity.

And now the Queen of Night
Deserts her ancient right
Of quivered arrows and a curvèd bow,
Sailing in midnight dark
(Her Crescent for a barque)
With troops of stars into the waves below;
And with a strand of her bright hair
Fishes, in timeless peace, for Pearls of Jordan there.

DU BOIS HUS

Translated by FRANCES CORNFORD

[*see p. 49*]

Who knows how many nymphs yearned for him!
 But the youth was always so haughty
 That the nymphs who loved him never could entice him,
 Never warm his indifferent heart.
 He often took up his abode in the woods,
 Uncouth always and unbending in aspect;
 And screened his face from the rays of the sun
 With garland of pine or green beech leaves.

* * *

I, *verse xliii*

Pale she is and pale her dress,
 Yet painted with roses and flowers and grasses:
 The curly hair of her golden head
 Falls on her modest dignified brow.
 The whole surrounding forest smiles at her
 So that her presence seems to alleviate its gloom.
 Her behaviour is as courteous as a King's;
 And by a mere glance she stills the tempests.

* * *

I, *verse xliv*

With calm tenderness flash her eyes
 Behind which she keeps love concealed:
 The whole surrounding atmosphere is made pleasant
 By the lights of love dancing around her.
 With heavenly joy her face is radiant,
 Sweetly coloured with privet and roses.
 Every breeze is silenced by her divine words,
 And each little bird sings in its own tongue.

* * *

She was seated on the gay grass,
 With a small wreath around her head
 Composed of as many flowers as ever nature created,
 The same as coloured her dress.
 And as soon as she brought to mind the young man,
 Somewhat fearfully raised her head:
 Then with her white hand she picked up the border of her
 dress
 And stood up, her lap full of flowers.*

* "Flowers" is used here as a symbol of desire.

[see pp. 92-3]

Note.—The resemblance between these verses and Botticelli's *Primavera* (if one art may be compared with another) will readily be apparent. We must, however, relegate the pleasing suggestion that the Mars and the Venus of the *Primavera* are portraits of Giuliano de' Medici and Simonetta Vespucci respectively, to its proper place as a nineteenth century fantasy. The *Primavera* was painted c. 1478, and Simonetta died at least two years earlier. The *Birth of Venus* and the *Mars and Venus* which with the *Primavera* formed part of the decoration of the Medicean villa of Castello, were not painted until at least eight years later, so it is unlikely that either Giuliano or Simonetta appear in any of these works.

Sleep in the Valley

There's a green hollow where the river chants,
And slips in arrows through the water plants
Silver in sunshine from the proud hill's height,
A wooded valley, small and brimmed with light.

There the young soldier sleeps with thrown back head
In the cool cresses of the river-bed;
Unmoved upon the grassy verge he lies,
Pale in the rays that pour from summer skies.

Feet stretched among the rushes, sleeping still,
He smiles as children do when they are ill.
Cherish him warmly, Earth; He is cold. Be kind.
His nostrils cannot drink the flowering wind;
An arm across his breast, he sleeps in the sun,
His temples bare, and a red hole in one.

RIMBAUD

Translated by FRANCES CORNFORD

[see p. 139]

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